

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"The Bonding"
#40273-153

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3RD REVISED FINAL DRAFT

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STAR TREK: "The Bonding" - REV. 8/23/89 - CAST

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Bonding"

CAST

PICARD

RIKER

MARLA ASTER

DATA

BEVERLY

TROI

GEORDI

WORF

WESLEY

O'BRIEN

JEREMY ASTER (age 10)

TEACHER

Non-Speaking

SECOND TEACHER

SIX N.D. CREWMEMBERS

TWO SECURITY GUARDS

TWO ARCHEOLOGICAL OFFICERS

TWO TECHNICIANS

SEVERAL STUDENTS (ages 8 to 13)

MEDICAL ENSIGN

BARTENDER

STAR TREK: "The Bonding" - REV. 8/23/89 - SETS

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Bonding"

SETS

INTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

MAIN BRIDGE
TRANSPORTER ROOM
CORRIDOR
SICKBAY
CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM
ENGINEERING
TEN FORWARD
WORF'S QUARTERS
ASTER QUARTERS
CLASSROOM
TEACHER'S OFFIC

COMPUTER ROOM
TURBOLIFT

ASTER HOME

LIVING/DINING ROOM

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

PLANET

STAR TREK: "The Bonding" - REV. 8/23/89 - PRONUNCIATION

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Bonding"

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

R'uustai

ROOSE-tie

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Bonding"
TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The ship is in standard orbit over an old and scarred planet. The world is predominantly gray with overtones of flecked green and brown and conveys an impression of an old battlefield coming back to life.

CUT TO:

2 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

PICARD and RIKER are standing near an access station observing the play of information across one of the monitors. WESLEY is at the Conn, DATA is at Ops and TROI is in the command area, while SEVERAL N.D. CREWMEMBERS are at duty stations or passing through the Bridge.

DATA

Away Team reporting in, Commander.
Lieutenant Worf standing by.

RIKER

This is Riker, report Lieutenant.

WORF'S COM VOICE

The archeologists have identified the markings in these caverns. This planet was apparently once home to a race known as the Koinonians.

PICARD

What do we know about them, Data?

DATA

The Koinonians were an intelligent culture which became embroiled in a war that lasted several generations. Our best evidence indicates they destroyed themselves.

2 CONTINUED:

WORF'S COM VOICE

We have completed our survey of
the third tunnel and will proceed
into the ceremonial chamber.

RIKER

Affirmative. Enterprise out.

PICARD

Destroyed themselves, Data?

DATA

According to historical records.
This will be the first
opportunity for a Federation
team...

At this point, Troi's eyes suddenly go wide.

TROI

Captain! Beam them up quickly!
They---

Before she can complete her warning, the voice of Worf
breaks in over the COM channel.

WORF'S COM VOICE

Emergency beam-up! Enterprise,
emergency! Injuries. Away---

PICARD

Transporter Room!

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

I've got them, Captain.

PICARD

Beam them straight to Sickbay.
Doctor Crusher, incoming wounded.

There is a tense pause while they wait for word. Troi
senses what has happened and shakes her head sadly when
Riker looks at her.

CUT TO:

2A INT. SICKBAY (OPTICAL)

DOCTOR CRUSHER and a MEDICAL ENSIGN move to the Away
Team as four people MATERIALIZE.

2A CONTINUED:

WORF is crouched in a defensive position over the prone and motionless form of LIEUTENANT MARLA ASTER, a woman in her early thirties. Worf's phaser is out and at the ready while his uniform is singed and slightly torn, blood flows from a small wound in his shoulder. Behind him are TWO N.D. CREWMEMBERS, who are archeological officers. Beverly and Medical Supernumeraries move into action...

CUT TO:

3 OMITTED

4 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

While Troi is already sure of the result, the rest of the Bridge crew waits for word from Sickbay.

BEVERLY'S COM VOICE
Away Team is aboard, Captain.
(beat)
One dead on arrival.

Picard and the Bridge crew react.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's Log: Stardate 43506.5
The Enterprise remains in standard
orbit while we investigate the
tragedy which has struck the Away
Team.

CUT TO:

6 INT. SICKBAY

Picard is standing in the doorway. Beverly stands over the bed holding Marla Aster's body. Worf stands nearby. His uniform bears the evidence of the recent violent encounter, blood still seeps from his wound.

PICARD (V.O.)

(continuing)

Lieutenant Marla Aster, ship's
archaeologist has been killed in
what should have been a routine
mission. Whatever the
explanation, it will not bring
back a valued and trusted officer.

A MEDICAL SUPERNUMERARY moves the bed Aster's body is resting on into an isolated area of Sickbay. Another member of the Away Team is being examined by Beverly in the background, as Worf makes his report to Picard.

6 CONTINUED:

WORF

We had completed our investigation of the third tunnel. Our scans had indicated no weapons or traps of any kind. Lieutenant Aster was three meters behind me. An explosive device went off. There was no warning. Lieutenant Aster bore the full brunt of the detonation.

(pause)

I was in command. I bear full responsibility.

PICARD

Lieutenant. I have the utmost faith that you acted properly and in the best traditions of Starfleet.

Beverly moves over to Worf.

BEVERLY

Let's take a look at that shoulder...

Troi ENTERS the Sickbay.

6 CONTINUED: (2)

TROI

Lieutenant Aster is survived by
a son, Jeremy. Twelve years old.

PICARD

What about his father?

TROI

He is also deceased, Captain.

Picard and Beverly exchange a glance.

TROI

(continuing)

His only living relatives are an
aunt and uncle residing on Earth.

PICARD

Where is the boy now?

TROI

In class. I've alerted the
teacher to expect us.

Picard acknowledges. He glances at Beverly, who is
still troubled by the loss of a patient, but can
identify with the Captain's unpleasant task. Picard
and Troi then turn and prepare to leave the Sickbay.

WORF

Captain.

Worf swings off the biobed.

WORF

(continuing)

I must accompany you. I commanded
the Away Team.

PICARD

I appreciate the offer but this
is my responsibility.

Worf acknowledges, unhappily...

6 CONTINUED: (3)

BEVERLY

Go to your quarters. Rest.
You're relieved of duty for
twenty-four hours.

Worf opens his mouth.

BEVERLY

(continuing)

That's an order.

Worf EXITS. Picard keys his insignia on their way out.

6A INT. CORRIDOR

PICARD

Picard to Bridge.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Yes, Captain.

PICARD

Assign Commander La Forge to lead
another Away Team to the digsite.
I want to know why this
happened...

7 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker at Command. Wesley at Conn, Data at Ops,
Supernumerary at tactical.

RIKER

Yes, Captain.

And pull back to include Wes in the foreground.

PICARD'S COM VOICE

I will be with Counselor Troi and
young Jeremy Aster.

RIKER

(with sympathy)

I understand. Riker out.

Wes exchanges a glance with Riker. A sad memory --

WESLEY

He had to do the same thing for
me.

7 CONTINUED:

Riker nods, he knows.

RIKER

Do you know Jeremy well?

WESLEY

(shakes his head)

But I know what it'll be like for him.

RIKER

It's part of life in Starfleet, Wesley.

WESLEY

(acknowledges)

They're very careful to prepare us for... anything. Still...

RIKER

I know.

WESLEY

How can you ever get used to it... to telling them... ?

RIKER

(softly)

You hope you never do.

Data has been listening with interest to this exchange.

CUT TO:

8
thru OMITTED
9

10 INT. WORF'S QUARTERS

The room is very dark. Worf is dressed in an elaborate Klingon robe and sash. A strange, twisted, massive candle burns on the desk before him.

He studies the candle with painful eyes for several beats and then hangs his head with shame. He reaches out very deliberately, and snuffs the candle with the flat side of a knife blade. Darkness.

CUT TO:

10A INT. TURBOLIFT

Troi and Picard. She senses his frustration.

TROI
I sense the weight of this duty
on you, Captain...

Picard begins to deny it, but then, frustrated --

PICARD
I really wonder...

He's almost letting his feelings show, which is not
at all comfortable for him. He stops the Turbolift
in mid-trip...

PICARD
(to computer)
Halt.

The Turbolift stops...

PICARD
I've always believed that carrying
children on a starship... it's a
questionable policy.

She listens, gives him room...

PICARD
(continuing)
Serving on a starship means
accepting certain risks and
dangers. But did Jeremy Aster
make that choice?

TROI
Death and loss are an integral
part of life everywhere. Leaving
the boy on Earth would not have
protected him from that.

PICARD
No, but Earth is not likely to
be ordered to the Neutral Zone
to repel a Romulan attack...
(beat, softer)
It was my command which sent his
mother to her death. She
understood her mission and my
duty. Will he?

10A CONTINUED:

TROI
In time. With help.
(beat)
Ensign Crusher does.

A beat. He glances at her and perhaps we sense that Picard wonders if Wesley really ever has come to an understanding since they have both avoided the subject. In response to that feeling, re-emphasizing --

TROI
(continuing)
Yes, he does. And so will Jeremy.

And she is doing her job for the Captain now... easing, but not closing, a lingering issue for him.

PICARD
(to computer)
Resume.

11 OMITTED

12 INT. CLASSROOM

Picard and Troi ENTER. The classroom is warm, inviting and is crammed with plants, computers, antique books, and myriad games from across the Federation. TWO TEACHERS are working with SEVERAL STUDENTS in two study groups.

In one group, the age of the students run from roughly 8 to 13, and they are discussing a particular problem on a computer display screen around which they are all clustered. In the B.G., is the other study group studying other instruction devices. As Picard and Troi enter, the students look up in surprise and several point at the seldom-seen Captain of their ship. Conversation dies to a whisper. The nearest teacher hates like hell what his student is about to endure, but he stands and crosses to JEREMY ASTER.

TEACHER
Jeremy, the Captain needs to talk with you.

The boy's eyes go wide at this summons from the Captain. He is about twelve years old and has a quiet, sensitive look about him, with tousled black hair and deep-set eyes.

12 CONTINUED:

The other children look at him with reactions ranging from jealousy to fear. He walks forward with his teacher's arm around his shoulders.

JEREMY

I'm Jeremy, sir.

12 CONTINUED: (3)

Picard looks down at this innocent young face... the eyes of a twelve year old.

TEACHER
(indicates)
My office is over there,
Captain...

Picard acknowledges. The teacher indicates the way. Troi puts her arm around the boy and the trio walks out of the room.

13 OMITTED

13A INT. TEACHER'S OFFICE (FROM SCENE 13)

Troi has her hands on Jeremy's shoulders to offer the support of physical contact.

PICARD
Jeremy, it is my sad duty to tell
you that your mother has died.

And whatever our expectations might have been, we can throw them away. This is a 24th century child. He is a good soldier, uniquely mature. Prepared by experts to cope with the worst circumstances. There is no tear shed.

JEREMY
How, sir?

PICARD
An explosive device at the mission
site. She died instantly.

JEREMY
I understand.

Troi drops to one knee to be at his level...

TROI
I know your mother loved you very
much, Jeremy.

He nods. A silence.

13A CONTINUED:

PICARD

I've been told... you've also lost
your father.

JEREMY

Yessir. Five years ago. From
a Rushton Infection. I'm alone
now, sir.

And Picard may wonder just how 'mature' any of us could
be in this circumstance. But whatever is going on
inside, the boy does not reveal it.

PICARD

(softly)

No one is alone on the starship
Enterprise, Jeremy. No one.

As the boy and Picard look in each other's eyes...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

14 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise in orbit around the planet.

15 OMITTED

16 INT. ASTER QUARTERS

Troi and Jeremy. Troi is seated, watching Jeremy with that cool serenity which is so much a part of her nature. He doesn't quite know what to do with himself. But throughout the scene there is a repressed anger in the boy. (NOTE: This is a significant change... Even though the dialogue may be similar, the attitude behind must reflect unfocused anger that he is unwilling to touch.)

JEREMY

I really ought to get back to class... if I get behind...

Bringing the focus back --

TROI

I'm sure your mom wanted you to do well in school. Wasn't she a teacher on Earth?

JEREMY

(acknowledges)
She taught exo-archeology.

TROI

Why did she sign on the Enterprise?

JEREMY

She said she wanted to see the galaxy with her own eyes.

TROI

Was she happy doing that?

JEREMY

(trace of bitterness.)
Yeah. Real happy.

16 CONTINUED:

TROI

Did she ever tell you there was
a chance this might happen
someday?

JEREMY

Yes.

He moves away from her, seems drawn to the computer
terminal on his desk. He is completely unaware he is
doing this, but Troi has spotted the motion.

TROI

It might help if we talked about
how you're feeling.

Curt --

JEREMY

You're a Betazoid. You know how
I feel.

TROI

(conversationally)

When my father died we were living
on Betazed. My mother and all
her people are telepathic. I kept
wanting to talk about my father,
and they kept pulling my thoughts
out of my head before I could say
the words. It made me very angry.

JEREMY

(curious despite
himself)

Why?

TROI

I needed to say them out loud.
I was confused about why he went
away. Was it me -- something I
had done. I felt that if I could
just say the words he would
somehow know how much I loved him
and missed him.

She looks at him.

16 CONTINUED: (2)

TROI
(continuing)
I thought you might feel the same way.

JEREMY
(avoiding his feelings)
She just had to do her job. I understand that.

TROI
Did she talk to you about her mission before she left?

JEREMY
She told me about the ruins.
(a beat, softer)
She always made it like a story book.

He's back at the computer.

TROI
Why do you keep going over to the terminal?

JEREMY
(beat)
No reason.

A long beat.

JEREMY
(continuing)
It's nothing. I broke it yesterday.

TROI
(studies him a beat)
Was your mother angry when you broke it?

He nods.

TROI
(continuing)
Was she still angry when she left?

He doesn't acknowledge, but obviously she was.

16 CONTINUED: (3)

TROI
(continuing)
Jeremy, did that broken terminal
cause the accident?

JEREMY
No.

TROI
Did you cause the accident?

JEREMY
No. I just never had a chance
to tell her I fixed it.

TROI
Jeremy, if your mother were here
right now, would she forgive you?

Jeremy swallows hard. Still no tears. He nods his
head, yes, sighs a deep breath. Troi knows that's a
big step for now.

TROI
(standing; continuing)
I want you to have some time
alone for a little while. I'll
come back when you're ready to
talk again.

JEREMY
How will you know?

Troi crosses to the boy, hugs him lightly, then still
holding him in the circle of her arms she smiles down
at him and says,

TROI
This time I will use my Betazoid
sense, and I'll know.

His eyes say he's beginning to appreciate her. Troi
EXITS.

17
thru OMITTED
17B

17C INT. TEN-FORWARD

Riker is seated at a table. He stares out at the
stars. There is a drink in front of him.

17C CONTINUED:

SIX OTHER PEOPLE and a BARTENDER are also present.
Data crosses to Riker. The Commander looks up.

DATA

Excuse me. Am I intruding?

RIKER

No, sit down.

There is a curious subtext to his question --

DATA

How well did you know Lieutenant
Aster?

RIKER

We spent some time together. Not
very well.

A beat, Data waits for more... his face is very
inquisitive. Off his look --

RIKER

How well did you know her?

DATA

Why do you ask?

RIKER

(reacts)

Well... I mean you just asked me...

DATA

But why do you ask the question?
I have been asked several times
to define 'how well I knew
Lieutenant Aster' since her death.
And I heard you ask Wesley on the
Bridge if he knew Jeremy well.

(beat)

Does the question of familiarity
have some bearing on death?

RIKER

(a beat)

Do you remember how we all felt
when Tasha died?

17C CONTINUED: (2)

DATA

I do not sense the same feelings
of... absence... that I associate
with Lieutenant Yar... although
I cannot say precisely why...

RIKER

That's just human nature, Data.

DATA

Human nature, sir?

RIKER

We feel a loss more intensely
when it's a friend.

DATA

But should not the feelings be
just as deep regardless of who
has died?

Riker thinks this over before answering.

RIKER

Maybe they should, Data. Maybe
if we felt the loss of any life
as keenly as we felt the death
of those close to us, our history
would've been a lot less bloody.

Data considers this as...

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

La Forge to Riker...

RIKER

You're back, Geordi...

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

Yessir, and we've brought back
a souvenir...

17D INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

Geordi giving his report to Picard and Riker. He has
brought back another explosive device... Data studies
it.

17D CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Five more just like it... all
identical to the one that killed
Lieutenant Aster...

DATA

They employ a subspace proximity
detonator. A normal tricorder
would never detect it.

17D CONTINUED:

PICARD

How long would you say they've
been there, Data?

DATA

It comes from the time of the
Koinonian Wars, Captain...

RIKER

Did you find them all, Geordi?

GEORDI

Yeah. But...
(off their looks)
Well, they were all sort of...
left there to be found.

PICARD

Left by whom? There are no
indications of life on this
planet.

GEORDI

I don't know, Captain... but it
was pretty obvious that they'd
been recently pulled out of the
ground and defused.

Off their reactions...

CUT TO:

18 INT. CORRIDOR

Troi is walking, head down, very thoughtful. Worf is
coming from the other direction. He sees her, checks,
and almost heads down another branching corridor. But
Troi senses him and looks up.

TROI

Worf!

The Klingon stops, but he's clearly uncomfortable.

WORF

(formally)
Counselor.

There is an uneasy silence.

18 CONTINUED:

TROI

I can understand that you don't
want to talk about what happened.

Worf glances around the corridor, and Troi understands his reticence in such a public place. She looks around and motions to a small room. Worf, with great dignity, follows her inside.

19 INT. COMPUTER ROOM

The room is dimly lit and only Worf and Troi are here at present.

WORF

I have made my report to the
Captain.

TROI

I'm more interested in how you
feel about what happened.

(a beat)

And right now I sense great anger.

Worf stiffens and only confirms Troi's perception.

WORF

I cannot seek revenge against
an enemy who turned to dust
centuries ago.

Troi merely waits. Her attitude is clam and quiet. She is making no judgments.

WORF

(continuing)

Her death was senseless. The last
victim of a forgotten war.

TROI

Go on.

Her eyes are locked with Worf's, she is very still, helping him to speak, but applying no pressure.

WORF

There is no more to be said.

19 CONTINUED:

TROI

A person has died while under your command. It may happen again. If you cannot learn to release the anger and the guilt, to talk about it...

WORF

A leader must stand alone. As Captain Picard does.

TROI

(a little sharply)
Captain Picard talks to me.

A beat. Worf realizes he cannot get off the hook here. But this "sharing feelings" is as alien a concept as he will ever encounter. Reluctantly --

WORF

Then may I seek your counsel about my plan to make the R'uustai with the boy...

And she's caught off guard by something so... well, Klingon-intense...

TROI

The Bonding.

And her reaction is exactly what he feared. Already he hates this --

WORF

It is my right.

TROI

It's a very generous offer, but he's not a Klingon child. He has different sensibilities.

WORF

He is an orphan. I am an orphan. He will understand.

A long beat. And that is as close as Worf gets to exposing his feelings. And she appreciates that.

19 CONTINUED: (2)

TROI

Right now, there isn't much he
can understand, Worf. He's
holding all his feelings inside...

(beat)

Children often feel they must be
true to the memory of a lost
parent.

(MORE)

19 CONTINUED: (3)

TROI (Cont'd)

If you offer affection to them too soon they can feel guilty returning that affection. As if they're betraying the love they feel for the parent.

WORF

I only wish to honor his mother.

TROI

I know. And I understand this means a great deal to you. But you must be prepared, Worf... he is very angry too, but his anger is deep inside him... When he finally touches it, it will strike out in many directions... including yours.

(a beat)

Talk with him. Be with him. But do not rush this. When he is ready, we will know.

Worf acknowledges and proceeds on his way, and Troi watches him.

CUT TO:

20
thru OMITTED
22

22A INT. ASTER QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

Jeremy is curled up on the sofa looking at a hand held screen with a home video of him and his mother together at home on Earth... his face is thoughtful, reflective, not in pain. There is a CHIME. He goes to the door, touches the panel and it opens to reveal Worf.

WORF

Jeremy Aster, I am Lieutenant Worf. May I enter?

Worf ENTERS... he wants desperately to do the right thing... but is now aware of Troi's concerns. The boy stares coldly at him... But the anger is all repressed, not overt.

22A CONTINUED:

JEREMY

You were in command of the Away
Team.

22A CONTINUED: (2)

WORF

Yes. I was with Lieutenant Aster,
your mother, when she died.

(guilty)

Her death lies between us. It
is my hope...that...someday...
it can also bind us.

Jeremy doesn't know what that means, it's just another
nice sounding 'I'm sorry.'

JEREMY

(with an attitude)

You're a Klingon, aren't you?

Worf doesn't know how to take that exactly...

WORF

Yes.

JEREMY

We studied Klingons in school.

WORF

What do they teach you about us?

JEREMY

You used to be our enemies.

Worf acknowledges, tries to say something meaningful
to the boy...

WORF

Do they teach you that every
Klingon hopes to die in the line
of duty as your mother did?

Jeremy just looks at him, refusing to connect.

WORF

In my tradition, we do not grieve
the loss of the body... we
celebrate the releasing of the
spirit.

Jeremy looks at the imposing figure... confident, you
can't tell me anything I don't already know -

22A CONTINUED: (3)

JEREMY

I understand death. They teach
us all about it.

Worf studies the twelve-year-old for a long beat.

22A CONTINUED: (4)

WORF

Jeremy Aster, we may both understand it, but we must bring meaning to your mother's death.

(beat)

Perhaps we can do it together.

Jeremy's reaction suggests he doesn't see how...

22B

thru OMITTED

22C

22D INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

The Captain is going over status reports on the computer screen as the DOORBELL RINGS.

PICARD

Come.

The door slides open and Troi stands there...

PICARD

Counselor. How is the boy?

TROI

He is being very brave.

PICARD

Good.

TROI

No. He'll have to get past brave. He is a very angry boy... He must learn to express that anger before he can really say good-bye to his mother.

She sits.

PICARD

How can we help?

TROI

I've asked Beverly if we might get Wesley to talk to Jeremy about his father's death...

Picard acknowledges.

22D CONTINUED:

TROI

The one unusual element is Worf.

PICARD

Oh?

TROI

In many ways he is suffering as badly as the boy. He wishes to involve Jeremy in a Klingon ceremony called the R'uustai... the bonding...

22D CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

I know it.

(thoughtful)

Perhaps it would be a comfort to both your patients, Counselor.

TROI

I don't think the boy would accept Worf right now. Later, perhaps. But it will have to be handled most delicately.

PICARD

As you always do.

Picard pauses, and looks at Troi with appreciation.

PICARD

(continuing)

I break the unpleasant news and my responsibility ends. You have to stay with them through the entire grieving process.

TROI

We find many different ways to deal with our pain, but over the years, I've discovered it is in our joy that the uniqueness of each individual is revealed. If I can help a person back to a state of joy... well, my role has its rewards.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Captain, we're picking up an energy field on the planet's surface...

22E INT. MAIN BRIDGE - CONTINUOUS

As Picard and Troi ENTER...

PICARD

Location?

RIKER

Two kilometers north of the Away Team's beamdown point.

22E CONTINUED:

PICARD

Indeed.
(to Data)
Full scan.

Data works his console.

DATA

Inconclusive, Captain.

TROI

Sir, I sense a... presence on the planet. Very vague.

PICARD

A life form?

TROI

I can't be sure... the emotions of the crew are particularly strong right now and it's difficult to filter them out.

PICARD

Data, scan analysis on Main Viewer...

As Data works...

22F INT. DOCTOR CRUSHER'S OFFICE

Wesley ENTERS. Beverly is at her desk, working.

BEVERLY

Hi.

WESLEY

(a little glum)

Hi.

He sort of plops down... something on his mind, not necessarily about to talk about it. She continues her work, talks without making eye contact...

BEVERLY

Troi stopped by a little while ago. She was wondering if you might be willing to talk to Jeremy Aster at some point.

2F CONTINUED:

WESLEY
(uncomfortable)
Me? What for?

She looks up.

BEVERLY
Because of your Dad.

Wesley frowns... he's already been revisiting those memories today.

WESLEY
What would I tell him?

BEVERLY
It would help him to talk with someone who's gone through this.

Wesley sighs, would rather not... how do I get out of this?

BEVERLY
We had each other, Wes... he doesn't have anyone to lean on now... and he might be more comfortable talking about it with someone who's not much older...

WESLEY
(interrupting, don't bug me)
Okay. Let me think about it.

BEVERLY
(beat)
Okay.

A long beat.

WESLEY
You ever think about him, Mom?

BEVERLY
Your father?
(she nods)
Sure, I do.

A long beat. And this is hard on Wesley...

22F CONTINUED: (2)

WESLEY

Sometimes I can't quite remember
his face... it scares me.

Beverly studies him...

BEVERLY

That happens to all of us, Wes...
(beat; honest)
Sometimes I can't get his face out
of my mind.

WESLEY

(nods)
Today... it's like I can see it
all as clearly as if it were
yesterday... the way he looked
when he hugged me good-bye...
Captain Picard's eyes when he
came to tell us...

Their eyes meet. A tear slides down his cheek. She
comes over and they hold each other.

CUT TO:

22G INT. MAIN BRIDGE - (OPTICAL) (PREVIOUSLY 22A)

As before. On the viewscreen is a graphic analysis
of the energy form they're tracking on the planet...

RIKER

Data, run comparison with known
phenomena.

DATA

(works his station)
The pattern has no exact match
in Federation records.

PICARD

Is it alive?

DATA

A possibility.

And Troi just watches it... slow push in on her....

22G CONTINUED:

GEORDI'S COM VOICE
Captain, I'm getting an unusual
magnetic flux reading from the
anti-matter containment pods.

... to an extreme closeup of Troi ending as she senses
something new, something extreme as she murmurs...

TROI
My God.

CUT TO:

23 INT. ASTER QUARTERS (OPTICAL)

Jeremy is seated at the desk once again studying the
moving picture of him and his mother. He senses
movement from a hallway behind him, turns to see the
arrival of MARLA ASTER. Jeremy's eyes go wide.

JEREMY
Mom!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

24 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The starship is still cruising serenely in orbit.

25
thru OMITTED
30

31 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

As before. Riker and Picard have moved to join Geordi at the Engineering station, studying the odd readings...

GEORDI

All systems are functioning normally -- still, there's a fluctuation in the containment field. I can't account for it.

RIKER

Data, is it related in some way to the energy field on the planet?

And Troi is still getting those radical vibes...

TROI

(sotto voce)
Captain...

DATA

There is a beam of highly charged particles emanating from the planet...

TROI

Captain, there is a presence aboard the Enterprise.

Reactions.

PICARD

An alien presence... ?

She doesn't know...

RIKER

No intruder noted by the ship's sensors, Captain...

31 CONTINUED:

TROI

A presence...

Beginning behind the above --

RIKER

Security, all decks... yellow
alert... possible intruder...

On Troi trying to come to grips with her senses...

CUT TO:

31A INT. ASTER QUARTERS

Jeremy stares with bewilderment up at his mother.
Marla Aster reaches out to brush a hand across Jeremy's
hair. Jeremy reflexively backs away.

JEREMY

They said you were dead.

MARLA

There was a mistake. It's okay.

Jeremy is confused. He's yearning to accept this, but
still he holds back.

JEREMY

But there was an explosion... you
were hurt.

MARLA

Jeremy, I'm not hurt. I'm fine.
You mustn't think any more about
it.

She moves to him. He backs away from her.

MARLA

The important thing is, I'll never
leave you again.

She smiles at him, crosses to the desk.

MARLA

(continuing)

Oh, I see you fixed the terminal.

JEREMY

Just after you. you left.

31A CONTINUED:

MARLA

I'm sorry I got so angry about that. I'm really proud of you -- you fixed it without even being asked.

This woman is damned convincing. But Jeremy is still reluctant to accept her. Marla extends her hand.

Slowly, cautiously, Jeremy reaches out, touches Marla's hand. It's warm and real. Jeremy's surprised. He gazes at Marla -- he desperately wants this to be his mother.

MARLA

(warm smile)

I think somebody needs a hug.

And that does it. Jeremy gives himself up to the fantasy, buries himself in his mother's arms, and for the first time since the accident, SOBS softly. Marla comforts him, strokes his head. Everything's all right now.

After a long beat, Marla pulls back, takes Jeremy's hand.

MARLA

We have to go now.

JEREMY

Where?

MARLA

To the planet. That's where we're going to live now.

JEREMY

(confused again)

We're not going to stay on the Enterprise any more?

MARLA

No.

(a beat)

We're going to live in a home just like we used to on Earth.

Jeremy's not sure about this, but Marla's warmth and serenity allay his doubts:

31A CONTINUED: (2)

MARLA
(continuing)
You'll see. I promise.

There is a CHIME. Jeremy moves to the door, opens it to reveal Worf... Jeremy is excited. (There is no repressed anger any more.)

JEREMY
Lieutenant Worf... did they tell you? It was a mistake.

Worf reacts to the boy's glee, then as he steps in, is blown away as ?? sees Marla smiling at him...

JEREMY
(continuing)
She didn't die. She's alive.

As the boy moves to her...

WORF
Jeremy, come here...

MARLA
Lieutenant Worf, it's all right.
I'm here for the boy.

Worf starts to pull his phaser, and doesn't know what the hell to do with it... even he has to wonder a moment - is it Marla Aster? He touches his insignia.

WORF
Lieutenant Worf to Captain Picard.

CUT TO:

32 OMITTED

33 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

PICARD
Go ahead.

WORF'S COM VOICE
Lieutenant Aster is in her quarters.

Exchanged looks.

33 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Repeat, Worf... ?

WORF'S COM VOICE

Lieutenant Aster. She's here.
In her quarters. With the boy.

Reactions. Picard and Troi exchange a look.

PICARD

Do not provoke her or interfere
in any way until I arrive.
Picard out.

(to Riker)

Have security moving that way but
tell them to keep their distance.
You have the Bridge. Counselor...

Troi's already out of her chair. She and Picard EXIT.

CUT TO:

33A INT. ASTER QUARTERS

Marla looks calmly at Worf.

MARLA

There's nothing to worry about.
I'm going to take care of Jeremy
and make him happy.

(to Jeremy)

It's time to go.

WORF

Where are you taking the child?

JEREMY

To the planet.

Marla smiles a winning smile at Jeremy:

MARLA

Come on, Jeremy.

Jeremy dutifully leaves Worf, joins Marla, takes her
hand. Together they EXIT followed by Worf, who keys
his insignia...

WORF

Worf to Picard, they're leaving
their quarters...

34
thru OMITTED
35

36 INT. CORRIDOR

Worf follows Marla and Jeremy down the corridor.
Security men arriving do not interfere, exchange
glances with Worf, trail...

WORF
(keys insignia)
Captain, I believe we're headed
for Transporter Room Three.

36A INT. TURBOLIFT

Picard and Troi moving quickly...

PICARD
We're on our way.

CUT TO:

37 OMITTED

38 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

O'Brien is making adjustments to the transporter side
panels. He is running a monitor over the circuits and
comparing readings. The DOOR OPENS and Marla, Jeremy,
and Worf ENTER.

O'Brien reacts to the presence of a dead woman in his
transporter room. Looks to Worf. Marla smiles sunnily
at the Transporter Chief.

MARLA
Chief O'Brien, Jeremy and I are
going down to the surface.

Marla and Jeremy cross to the platform. Jeremy lets
go of Marla's hand so they can stand on separate pads.

The DOORS OPEN. In the corridor are Picard, Troi, and
two SECURITY PERSONNEL; Picard motions for the Security
Personnel to remain in the corridor as he and Troi
ENTER. Picard gives Marla a hard look.

PICARD
Who are you?

38 CONTINUED:

MARLA
I'm Marla Aster...

JEREMY
(you know)
It's my mother, Captain... She's
alive.

Picard glances with concern at Jeremy.

PICARD
(to Marla)
What do you want?

MARLA
To take my child down to the
planet.

PICARD
I cannot permit that. This child
is my responsibility.

Marla truly can't fathom why these people are making
such a big deal out of nothing. Jeremy is confused and
not at all clear what is going on...

MARLA
I'm here to care for him. He
needs me. Why do you resist?

PICARD
Because I don't know who -- or
what -- you are.

JEREMY
Can't you see who she is?

38 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD

Jeremy, she appears to be your
mother, but she is not.

JEREMY

What do you mean?

38 CONTINUED: (2)

Jeremy looks to his mother...

MARLA
You're confusing the boy...

Picard glances at Worf, who has moved casually towards the Transporter pads... He takes the boy and pulls him away from his mother...

JEREMY
Wait...

He struggles, behind him, Marla's at a total loss...

JEREMY
(continuing)
No...stop...

Behind him, she suddenly VANISHES. Jeremy turns and she's gone...

JEREMY
Mon...Mom...

TROI
Jeremy...

JEREMY
NO...

As Troi escorts him out... off Picard and Worf's expressions:

39
thru OMITTED
40

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

41 OMITTED

42 INT. CORRIDOR

Troi and Jeremy walking together. The boy is angry, frightened and sad, completely disoriented.

JEREMY

What did you do to her?

TROI

Jeremy, I don't know what that was, but it was not your mother.

JEREMY

You saw her... She was here...

TROI

Your mother is dead.

JEREMY

I touched her. She was real.

TROI

Why would your real mother want you to go to the planet. There's nothing there but rocks and dust...

And Jeremy knows his real mother wouldn't do that... but still, it was her... they have reached the Aster quarters. Troi keys the door, and they ENTER.

43 INT. EARTH HOME (OPTICAL)

And Troi takes an involuntary step back for it is no longer the Enterprise stateroom. They are standing in the front room of the Aster home on Earth... as we saw it in the video...

Outside, through an open window, they HEAR the shouts and laughter of children, the barking of a dog. A cat sleeps on the sofa. There's a grandfather clock.

43 CONTINUED:

JEREMY

It's my house. My house on Earth.

Marla ENTERS from the back of the house.

MARLA

Exactly the way it was... remember,
Jeremy?

JEREMY

But how did you do it?

Marla smiles...

MARLA

Does it matter?

TROI

Yes. It matters.

She looks at Troi. Marla is very friendly --

MARLA

I am trying to understand your
resistance. You spoke of rocks
and dust on the planet? I decided
to show what awaits us there.

TROI

Why would you create this fantasy?

MARLA

(can't you understand?)
It's his home.
(holding out a hand to
Jeremy)
And it makes you happy, doesn't
it?

Jeremy is beyond words. Is she for real or not...
He knows now, in his heart, she isn't... But it's so
nice to be "home."

TROI

But it's not real.

MARLA

Isn't it? Jeremy, isn't that
really Patches?

Jeremy moves to the cat who looks up and meows at
him... climbs into his arms. Jeremy reacts.

43 CONTINUED: (2)

JEREMY

He knows me. It's him.

The cat was sleeping on a blanket on the sofa.

MARLA

Look -- your blanket...

Jeremy looks at it, touches it. It is his blanket. He reacts as the grandfather clock strikes a chime twice... clearly he recognizes the sound of the clock.

JEREMY

It's real. It's all real.

TROI

Jeremy, it's not. Could your real mother make all this appear?

He knows she could not, but he wants so much to believe.

TROI

(continuing)

You must not stay here.

Troi holds out her hand.

TROI

Come with me.

Jeremy looks at the Betazoid, at Marla, at the room. Shakes his head.

JEREMY

(very softly)

I can't.

TIME CUT TO:

43A INT. MAIN BRIDGE - CLOSE ON PICARD

PICARD

Is the boy in any danger?

TROI'S COM VOICE

I don't think so. She seems to want to help Jeremy.

43A CONTINUED:

And WIDEN to see Riker, Worf, Data, Beverly, Wesley
and Geordi at their various stations.

PICARD

Help him?

INTERCUT:

44 OMITTED

44A INT. EARTH HOME (INTERCUT WITH SCENE 44B)

Troi off to the side... in the background, the mother doll and Jeremy are dangling a piece of string for the cat... playing with it...

TROI	MARLA
By easing his pain. She	(background)
seems very confused by	Look at him. Look how
our resistance, Captain.	he tries to catch it...

JEREMY
(background)
Maybe he thinks it's a
mouse's tail.

PICARD

Troi, would it be wise to remove
Jeremy from his quarters?

TROI

He does not want to leave. I
would not recommend taking him
by force.

RIKER

She offers him everything. All
we offer is the cold reality of
his mother's death.

BEVERLY

What would you choose? If someone
came along and offered to give
you back your mother...
(towards Wesley)
... your father...
(MORE)

44A CONTINUED:

BEVERLY (Cont'd)
... your... husband... would any
of us say no so easily?

A beat. Picard sighs. To Troi --

PICARD
Remain in the cabin with them,
Counselor. We're going to try
to put an end to this from here...

TROI
Understood.

He signs off.

44B INT. MAIN BRIDGE

PICARD
Mister Data, can we determine for
certain the energy source from
the planet is powering this
creation?

DATA
The beam from the planet is
clearly tapping into the ship's
anti-matter, Captain...

GEORDI
I'd say it's running the
manifestation off our own energy.

PICARD
So there are limits to her
power...

RIKER
(nods)
That's why she needs the
Transporter to get the boy off
the ship.

Picard pauses and considers.

PICARD
So how do we cut the puppet's
strings?

44B CONTINUED:

GEORDI

By increasing the shield harmonics to match our antimatter containment fields, it is almost certain that the beam would be severed.

PICARD

Proceed.

RIKER

(to com)

Troi, stand by...

CUT TO:

44C
thru OMITTED
45

46 INT. EARTH HOME (OPTICAL)

The fantasy is up and running. Marla and Jeremy are still seated with the cat... Troi moves to them...

TROI

Jeremy, it's time for this to end... You know it's not real and it is over now...

MARLA

I'm not going to leave you, Jeremy. Ever again.

Jeremy looks with hurt and confusion from one woman to the other.

TROI

Jeremy, I won't lie to you or trick you.

MARLA

Jeremy we'll be happy together as soon as...

She and the fantasy VANISH. Jeremy looks at the space where she was and knows that his mother and the wonderful dream is really gone. He says very softly,

JEREMY

No...

46 CONTINUED:

As Troi moves to comfort him...

CUT TO:

47 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

GEORDI

Anti-matter containment pods
reading nominal...

DATA

The shields have severed the beam.

Data studies something on his console.

DATA

Captain, the energy field...

48 ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN - (OPTICAL)

The ghost-like blanket has gathered into a glowing
circular mass.

PICARD

Mister Crusher, take us out of...

Before he can finish...

49 OMITTED

50 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The energy form flashes across space and instantly
penetrates the ship.

CUT TO:

51

thru OMITTED

52

53 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The ship is rocked by the explosive arrival of the
energy. Red alert begins to sound.

CUT TO:

53AA INT. CORRIDOR - NEAR TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

The energy mass move down the hallway and into

53A INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM - (OPTICAL)

O'Brien goggles at the glowing energy form which has appeared in the room. After a beat...

O'BRIEN

Alien intruder. Transporter Room
Three. Security alert. Alien...

The form zaps at him, forcing him away from the console.

INTERCUT:

53B OMITTED

53C INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

(to com)

Security to Transporter Room
Three...

Picard on the move...

PICARD

Lieutenant Worf, Commander La
Forge with me... Number One you
have the Bridge.

53D INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM/CORRIDOR - (OPTICAL)

O'Brien is being driven out of the room by the force. Two security guards arrive. They are flung back. One of them fires his phaser, but it has no effect. The energy force zips back into the Transporter Room.

CUT TO:

53E INT. ASTER QUARTERS/EARTH HOME (OPTICAL)

Troi is comforting Jeremy when Marla and the Earth Home MATERIALIZE, and judging from the expression with which she favors Troi she is not happy.

53E CONTINUED:

She brushes past the Betazoid, moves to Jeremy and takes his hand. He's scared, confused...

MARLA

Come, Jeremy, we will not let them separate us again. We are going home.

Off Troi's reaction as we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

54
thru OMITTED
66

67 INT. TURBOLIFT

with Picard, Geordi and Worf... red alert sounding.

TROI'S COM VOICE

(urgently)

Captain, the image is back --
she's trying to take Jeremy off
the ship again.

PICARD

(keys insignia)

Acknowledged.

GEORDI

(keys insignia)

Engineering, this is La Forge.
Shut down power to all
Transporters. I'm on my way...

PICARD

Lieutenant Worf, to Transporter
Room Three.

They split up as they EXIT the Turbolift.

PICARD

(keys insignia)

Bridge, seal off deck eight,
corridors A and B.

68 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Data working the console...

DATA

Engaging force fields, Captain.
Transporters are down.

69 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

The energy force is still there reacting as the power
goes off, -- darting from component to component --
as Worf arrives, it bolts past him...

69 CONTINUED:

Worf checks on O'Brien and the security men who are okay.

WORF

Energy force has left Transporter Room Three... security alert, all decks...

69A INT. MAIN BRIDGE

RIKER

La Forge, the intruder may try to reinstate Transporter power.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

Understood, Commander...

70 INT. CORRIDOR (OPTICAL)

Just outside Aster's quarters, Marla leads Jeremy out as Troi watches by the door. A force field is blocking the corridor. She turns to look in the another direction. Another force field at the other end of the hall is up and has them trapped.

71 ANGLE - PICARD (OPTICAL)

arrives at the forcefield... touches his insignia.

PICARD

Bridge, release security forcefield eight - B.

The forcefield in front of him disappears. For a moment, he and the alien Marla study each other.

PICARD

How are you, Jeremy? Are you frightened?

JEREMY

-- no.

(off his look)

A little, sir.

71 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Of course. These are frightening things that are happening. We won't let anyone harm you.

(off-handedly)

Counselor, why don't you take the child to my quarters.

Troi takes a step toward Jeremy. Marla puts her arm around Jeremy's shoulder. Tightly. Possessively.

MARLA

No.

Troi backs off. Ma leads him back into their quarters. Picard a?? Troi follow.

72 INT. ENGINEERING (OPTICAL)

Geordi follows the energy form as it moves from console to console...

GEORDI

(keys insignia)

It's looking over everything, Commander... going to school... Let's hope it doesn't blow us to Kingdom Come while it's figuring out how to blow us to Kingdom Come.

The energy zips into a console...

INTERCUT:

73 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

The power returns...

WORF

Power's back in Transporter Room Three...

73A INT. ENGINEERING

Geordi moves quickly to the controls...

GEORDI

By-passing to manual override... shutting it down...

73AB INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

The Transporter goes down again.

WORF

Transporter is down again.

73A INT. MAIN BRIDGE

RIKER

Keep it down, Geordi... for as long as you can...

74 INT. EARTH HOME (OPTICAL)

Picard, Troi, Jeremy and Marla.

MARLA

It is only a matter of time, Captain, before we can power the Transporters ourselves...

PICARD

We? For whom else do you speak?

Marla takes a beat to determine how much must be explained to these people... finally --

MARLA

The accident on the surface was caused by a remnant of an old and tragic era. Two species once shared this world... one of energy... and one of matter. The physical beings you call the Koinonians destroyed themselves in unending, bitter wars. The surviving lifeforms on this world will not tolerate any further suffering from that dishonorable past. So they have made this possible... they have made me possible.

PICARD

I appreciate your motives. But his mother is dead. He must learn to live with that.

MARLA

I will be every bit his mother.

74 CONTINUED:

PICARD

But not his mother.

Jeremy watches them both... confused, trying to choose between what he wants and what is real. Picard's mind works... he keys his insignia...

PICARD

Picard to Lieutenant Worf.

WORF

Go ahead, Captain.

PICARD

Please escort Ensign Crusher to the Aster quarters. Picard out.

He exchanges a glance with Troi.

74 CONTINUED: (2)

MARLA

Your philosophy is curious,
Captain. What is so noble about
sorrow? I can provide him an
existence where he will feel no
pain, no anguish...

PICARD

It is at the heart of our very
nature... to feel pain... and
joy... that is what makes us what
we are.

MARLA

He is alone now in your world.
A child alone. How can you know
he won't be happier with me?

Picard glances at Jeremy with compassion.

PICARD

For a brief moment in time... he
surely would be. Any of us in
his place would be.

TROI

What would Jeremy do for friends
in your world?

Marla glances at Jeremy, considering this...

MARLA

He will have any friends he needs.

74 CONTINUED: (3)

TROI

And then will you provide for his
education, his health, his growth?
A career? A wife?

Marla considers all this... obviously for the first
time.

PICARD

Yes, it is quite an undertaking
you're proposing, isn't it?

MARLA

It is our duty to make him happy
again.

PICARD

Do you honestly believe he will
be happy in this total fiction
you wish to create?

Off her look which is beginning to show doubt...

PICARD

What will be his reason to live?

And she cannot answer that.

PICARD

What you offer is a memory... to
cherish... but not to live in.

(beat)

It is part of our life cycle to
accept the death of those we love.
He must deal with grief, not cover
it or hide from it. We are
mortal. Our time in this universe
is finite. It is the lesson every
human must learn.

The door opens to reveal Worf and Wesley. Wesley is
nervous, concerned.

WESLEY

Ensign Crusher reporting as
ordered, sir.

PICARD

Come in, Wesley.

Worf begins to leave... casually --

74 CONTINUED: (4)

PICARD

... No, stay, Lieutenant.

Worf comes in and stands at attention in the background.

PICARD

Wesley lost his father on a Starfleet mission when he was even younger than you are.

Jeremy reacts. Marla looks at him with compassion.

TROI

Your mother told me you were finding it difficult to talk to Jeremy. Why?

WESLEY

I don't know. I guess... I just didn't want to think about it any more, you know... all this has reminded me so much of that day...

He shrugs, very uncomfortable. Troi glances at Picard... he moves toward Wesley. Playing a role --

PICARD

The day I told you your father had been killed.

Wesley acknowledges...

PICARD

As I recall, you handled the news very well.

WESLEY

My parents taught me about the dangers of starfleet missions. I knew it could happen.

PICARD

(probing)

So you were prepared.

WESLEY

(a beat, introspective)

No, I don't think I was. Not really. How could anyone be... prepared to hear that his dad is... never coming home again.

74 CONTINUED: (5)

Picard acknowledges, of course. To Jeremy --

WESLEY

I just tried to be what everybody
expected me to be. Brave.
Mature.

PICARD

Are you saying you didn't want
anybody to see how you really
felt, Wesley?

And Wesley looks down as the memories sweep across
him... he looks down, nods. Softly --

PICARD

So how did you really feel?

WESLEY

(whispers)
Like somebody kicked me right in
the brain.

PICARD

(gently)
Somebody?

Wesley shrugs. Doesn't look at Picard.

TROI

Go ahead, Wesley. You've wanted
to tell him for a long time...

He looks up at Picard with a tear in his eye.

WESLEY

I was angry.
(long beat)
At you.

Of course, Picard knows this... but it's important for
them as well as Jeremy to get it all out now...

PICARD

Why, Wesley? Why were you angry
with me?

Wesley backs away from the feelings... he's gone as far
as he's comfortable... he shrugs... but that's not
enough...

74 CONTINUED: (6)

PICARD

Were you angry because I was the
one who told you he was dead?

WESLEY

(pause)

No.

PICARD

Then why?

Softly, painfully, outloud for the first time...

WESLEY

Because you led the mission. You
came back. My father didn't.

Picard acknowledges... moves away as Troi moves in with
great compassion...

TROI

How long were you angry with
Captain Picard, Wesley?

WESLEY

A long time.

(turns to Picard)

But not any more. Not even a
little, sir.

Picard's eyes close for a moment. He bows his head,
almost imperceptively. That wound is forever closed.
To Jeremy --

TROI

And you Jeremy... must be very
angry with Lieutenant Worf.

And Worf is caught off guard as the attention turns to
him. Jeremy looks at him.

TROI

He was in charge of your mother's
mission. Just as Captain Picard
was in command when Wesley's father
was killed. Isn't that right,
Jeremy

Jeremy looks at Worf.

WORF

She was my responsibility.

74 CONTINUED: (7)

TROI

Worf came back. Your mother
didn't.

And a long beat... as Jeremy is about to face the
reality. His eyes are angry, a tear rolls down his
cheek as he accuses Worf --

JEREMY

Why? Why weren't you the one who
died? Why did it have to be her?

A long beat as they look at each other... Jeremy's
tears come more easily now...

TROI

He can't answer that, Jeremy.
(to Marla)
None of us can.

PICARD

Lieutenant Worf also lost his
parents, Jeremy.

Jeremy reacts.

WORF

(to Jeremy)
They were killed in battle when
I was six.

He and Worf look at each other. The bonding has begun.
Worf glances at Picard and Troi. Troi nods... Worf
moves toward the boy.

WORF

When I was alone, humans helped
me. Let me help you.

74 CONTINUED: (8)

Jeremy looks back at Marla for one last hold on the
fantasy... off that moment --

74 CONTINUED: (8)

WORF

The Marla Aster I knew and honored
is not in this room. Nor does
she await you on the planet. Now
she lives only here...

(touches his chest)

And here.

Jeremy looks up to him through his tears. He cannot
speak.

WORF

(to Jeremy)

Join with me in the R'uustai, the
Bonding. You will become part
of my family now and for all time.
We will be brothers.

Worf offers his hand. Jeremy never looks back again
at Marla... he stretches out a hand tentatively to grasp
for Worf's hand. The Klingon is the ?? From a simple
handclasp he pulls the boy to him. Marla and Picard
regard each other for a long moment. She understands
she is no longer needed. She nods to Picard. She
lowers her head. She disappears. The room goes back
to normal -- the Aster quarters.

75
thru OMITTED
80

81 INT. WORF'S QUARTERS

Worf in full Klingon regalia. Jeremy is dressed in
a child's version of the Klingon robe. Jeremy and Worf
are framed by the window of the stateroom. The room is
dark. Five of the intricate candles are on various
tables in the B.G. One is lit.

Worf removes his sash, and places it across Jeremy's
shoulders. He and Jeremy take a candle, and walk to
the lit candle. They light theirs. They go through
the room lighting the other candles.

Worf finishes. Watches Jeremy. He stands looking out
at the stars.

WORF

SoS jIH batlh SoH.

Jeremy has come up behind the Klingon.

81 CONTINUED:

JEREMY

What does that mean?

WORF

It honors the memory of our
mothers. We have bonded and our
families are stronger.

Jeremy looks where Worf is looking.

JEREMY

(softly)

SoS jIH balth SoH.

82 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Moving at warp speed as we

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END