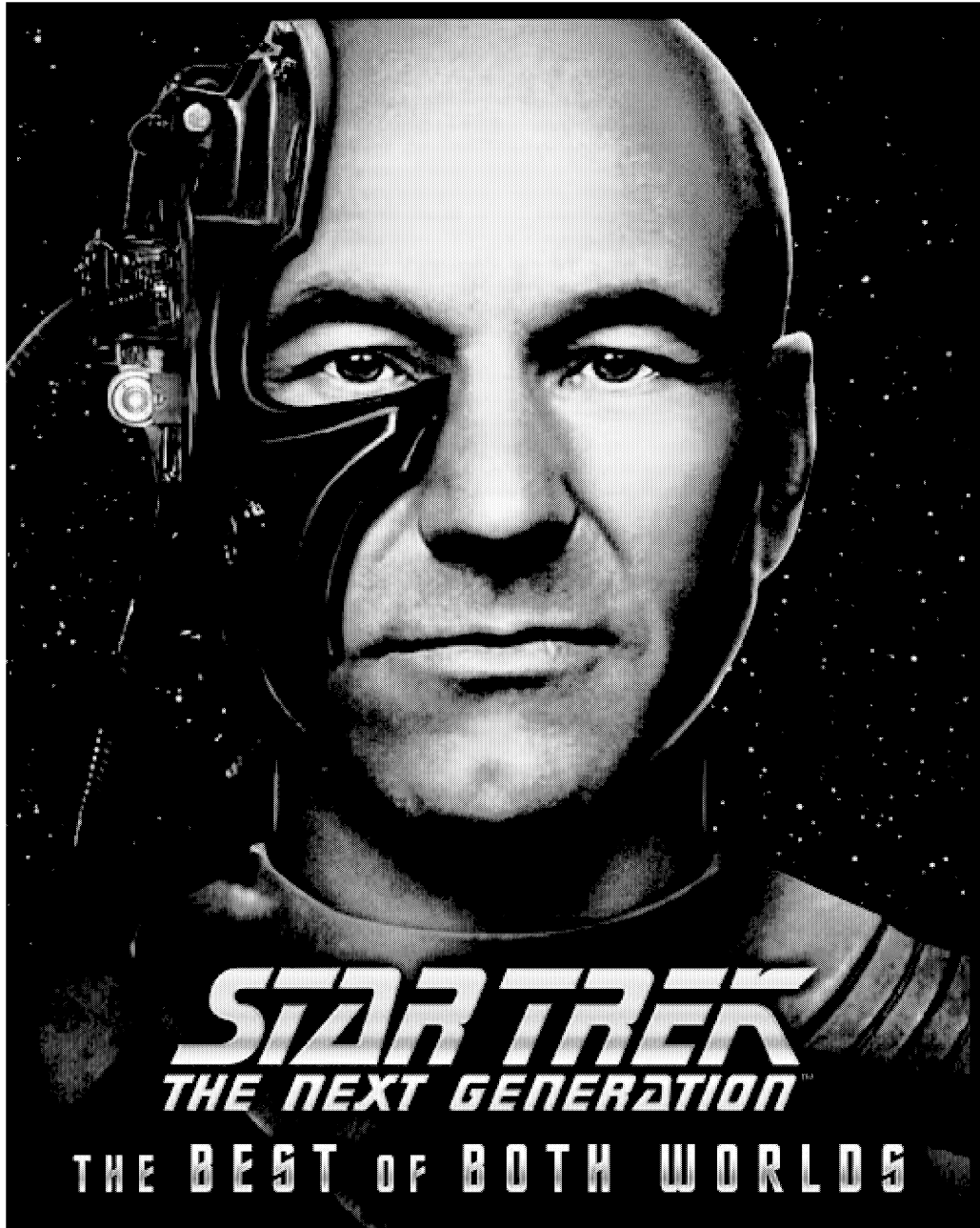


STAR TREK TNG: THE BEST OF BOTH WORLDS PTS 1 & 2



“The Best of Both Worlds, Part I”
Episode #40273-174

“The Best of Both Worlds, Part II”
Episode #40274-175

by

Michael Piller

FINAL DRAFT
1990

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STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"The Best of Both Worlds, Part I"
#40273-174

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Directed by
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FINAL DRAFT

APRIL 6, 1990

STAR TREK: "Best of Both Worlds" - REV. 4/6/90 - CAST

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

CAST

PICARD	ADMIRAL HANSON
RIKER	LT. COMMANDER SHELBY
DATA	BORG LEADER
BEVERLY	PICARD/BORG
TROI	
GEORDI	
WORF	
WESLEY	Non-Speaking SEVERAL BORG
GUINAN	
O'BRIEN	
Non-Speaking SUPERNUMERARIES TECHNICIAN	

STAR TREK: "Best of Both Worlds" - REV. 4/6/90 - SETS

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

SETS

INTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

MAIN BRIDGE
CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM
OBSERVATION LOUNGE
TURBOLIFT
CORRIDOR
TRANSPORTER ROOM
TEN-FORWARD
MAIN ENGINEERING
PICARD'S QUARTERS
RIKER'S QUARTERS
SHELBY'S QUARTERS

BORG SHIP

INTERIOR CHAMBER

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

JOURET FOUR SURFACE

BORG SHIP

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

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Leaving warp as it approaches a planet.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, Stardate 43994.1.
The Enterprise has arrived at
Jouret Four in response to a
distress signal from one of the
Federation's outermost colonies.

2 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

Riker enters, meets Geordi, Data and Worf. O'Brien at
the console.

RIKER

(to Worf)

Anything from the surface?

WORF

Nossir. There have been no
communications from the colony
for over twelve hours.

RIKER

Sensors picking up any signs of
life?

WORF

None.

Riker frowns. Anticipating the question --

O'BRIEN

The surface environment is safe
for transport, Commander.

Riker acknowledges as they move into transport
position... he nods to the technician and they
DEMATERIALIZE.

3 EXT. PLANET SURFACE - DAY

Fairly close so we have no clear bearings yet... the away team reacts to what they see... pulling back slowly.

RIKER

(keying insignia)

Mister O'Brien, verify these are accurate coordinates for New Providence colony.

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

Coordinates verified, sir. You're at the center of town.

4 EXT. PLANET SURFACE - WIDE - DAY (MATTE SHOT)

To see the away team is standing on an empty site... where the colony should be, there is now a shallow depression... as though it has been scooped out and taken away.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

5 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

In orbit. Another starship, transport class, has joined them.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, Stardate 43997.6.
Admiral Hanson and Lieutenant
Commander Shelby of Starfleet
Tactical have arrived to review
the disappearance of New
Providence colony. No sign
remains of the nine hundred
inhabitants.

6 INT. CAPT. READY ROOM

Picard, Riker, Hanson -- fifties, high ranking, hard driving -- and Shelby. She is late twenties, very beautiful, energetic, extremely motivated and ambitious. The mood is somber.

HANSON

The truth is... hell, we're not ready. We've known they were coming for over a year... we've thrown every resource we've got into this but still...

RIKER

Then, you're convinced it is the Borg... ?

SHELBY

That's what I'm here to find out. The initial descriptions of these surface conditions are almost identical to your reports from system J-two-five.

PICARD

(acknowledges)

Mister Riker wrote those reports... he agrees with you.

6 CONTINUED:

HANSON

(setting protocol)

Commander Shelby took over Borg tactical analysis six months ago. I've learned to give her a wide latitude when I want to get things done... That's how I intend to operate here.

It is clear that she's in charge as far as the admiral is concerned.

SHELBY

My priority has been to develop some kind, any kind of defense strategy...

RIKER

Obviously nothing we have now can stop them.

SHELBY

(acknowledges)

We've been designing new weapons... but they're still on the drawing board.

HANSON

We expected much more lead time. Your encounter with the Borg was over seven thousand light years away...

PICARD

If this is the Borg, it would indicate they have a source of power far superior to our own...

SHELBY

I'd like to see the colony site as soon as possible, Captain.

RIKER

It'll be night at the site in thirty minutes. We've scheduled an away team for dawn.

PICARD

(to Riker)

Why don't you show the commander to her quarters...

6 CONTINUED: (2)

Riker rises to escort her to the door...

RIKER

It's our poker night, Admiral.
There's always an open seat for
you...

HANSON

(would love to, but...)
Next time, Commander. Your
captain and I have a lot to cover.
But rumor has it that Commander
Shelby's played a hand or two...

Riker reacts, exchanges a look with Shelby who grins
as they EXIT. Hanson smiles. After the door closes...

HANSON

Keep your eye on her, Jean-Luc.
One impressive young lady...

Picard grins, obviously has a special affection for
this particular admiral.

PICARD

You seem rather taken with her,
J.P.

HANSON

Just an old man's fantasies. When
Shelby came into tactical, every
damned admiral's uncle had a take
on this Borg business... she cut
through it, put us on track.

Picard moves to a teapot, pouring...

PICARD

Earl Grey?

HANSON

Four sugars.
(beat)
She'd make you a hell of a first
officer.

Picard raises an eyebrow...

PICARD

I already have a hell of a first
officer.

6 CONTINUED: (3)

HANSON

Don't tell me he's gonna pass up
another commission?

PICARD

One's available?

HANSON

The Melbourne. It's his if he
wants it. Hasn't he told you?

Picard sighs, shakes his head, no... resigned to the
inevitable.

PICARD

Well, I guess I knew this day
would have to come... he'll make
a fine captain, J.P.

HANSON

You may want to tell him that.
(off Picard's look)
We're still waiting for his
decision. Hell, this is the third
time we've pulled out the
captain's chair for Riker. He
just won't sit down. And I'll
tell you something -- there are
a lot of young hotshots like
Shelby on their way up. Riker
could suddenly look like he's
standing still next to them. He's
hurting his career by staying put.
If I were you, I'd kick him in
the rear end for his own good.

As he drinks again, Picard reacts and...

7 INT. CORRIDOR

Riker moving with Shelby.

SHELBY

We know the Borg have no interest
in power or political conquest...

RIKER

(acknowledges)

They identify what's useful to
them, then consume it. Or try
to at least...

7 CONTINUED:

At her quarters, they pause...

SHELBY

But here's the question -- after they take what they want... what happens to the rest?

(off his look)

There has to be some evidence... residue... something that tells us they've been here.

8 INT. SHELBY'S QUARTERS - CONTINUOUS

As the door slides open and they ENTER.

SHELBY

I don't know exactly what I'm looking for... but we've tested the sections of the Enterprise's hull that were damaged by the Borg. There were some unusual magnetic-resonance traces...

RIKER

A Borg footprint?

SHELBY

That's my theory. I'll see if it holds up tomorrow.

(beat)

I've reviewed your personnel... I'll be assigning Mister La Forge and Mister Data to accompany me on the away team...

Riker barely reacts... isn't prepared to allow her to make crew assignments...

RIKER

I've... already assigned them to the away team, Commander. And I'll be with you as well.

A quick awkwardness.

SHELBY

(smiles)

Of course. I appreciate any assistance you can offer.

She measures him for a beat. Examining the quarters---

8 CONTINUED:

SHELBY

Tell me, something, Commander...
is serving aboard the Enterprise
as extraordinary an experience
as I've heard?

RIKER

Every bit of it.

SHELBY

Good.

(intimately sharing a
secret)

Because I intend to convince
Captain Picard that I'm the right
choice for the job.

RIKER

(beat)

Job? Which job... ?

SHELBY

Yours, of course.

(off his look,
"embarrassed")

I'm sorry... I heard you were
leaving.

And she's very good -- it could be taken as an innocent
faux pas by a lesser man, but Riker knows a fishing
expedition when he sees one... their eyes connect, he
won't bite...

RIKER

If I am... I'm sure you'll be the
first to know, Commander.

(beat)

Poker's at seventeen hundred
hours, my quarters, deck eight...

He EXITS. Hold just a beat on her reaction and...

8A INT. RIKER'S QUARTERS - POKER TABLE

Troi is the dealer, Wesley, Geordi, Riker, Data,
Shelby... five card stud... four cards have been dealt.

DATA

I will buy another card,
Counselor.

8A CONTINUED:

Throws a pair of chips in...

WESLEY

Got another king in the hole,
Data?

DATA

I am afraid I cannot answer that
Wesley. And as you are a newcomer
to the game, may I say it is
inappropriate to ask.

Troi deals Data his last card.

TROI

No help there.

GEORDI

(bad night)
Fold. Again.

WESLEY

I'm in.

Throws in his chips. His card is a third jack.

TROI

Three jacks looking back for the
handsome young ensign.

Reactions around the table. Data folds.

GEORDI

Beginner's luck.

Shelby puts her chips out... gets a worthless card.

TROI

Pair of deuces stands.

Riker throws in his chips... gets a card that continues
his straight flush... reactions.

TROI

Possible flush, possible straight
flush. The bet is yours, Mister
Crusher.

Wes looks nervously at Riker.

WESLEY

I'm in for ten...

8A CONTINUED: (2)

He throws in a pair of chips. Shelby studies Wesley carefully... and then throws in her two chips to stay in. But the tension is clearly between Riker and Wesley. Riker gives him his best poker face.

RIKER

(to Wesley)

Time to put on the long pants,
Wes. I'll see your ten. And
raise you a hundred.

GEORDI

He's got the straight flush.

DATA

Not necessarily. Commander Riker
may be bluffing, Wesley.

Wes studies Riker's face. Breaks...

WESLEY

I don't think so. I fold.

GEORDI

(groans)

With three jacks?

(shakes his head)

Wesley, you may get straight A's
in school, but you've still got
a little to learn about poker...

And so the attention turns to Shelby... who looks at Riker and they look at each other and after a long look beat...

SHELBY

I've only got two pair, Commander.
But I've got to see that blind
card. I'll call.

She puts in her chips. Riker blinks... looks down at his card... turns it over. It busts his straight flush. He's bluffing. Reactions. Wesley groans, hangs his head.

GEORDI

(delighted)

You got him!

Riker and Shelby's eyes meet. She collects the winnings.

9 OMITTED

10 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

In orbit. The other ship alongside.

11 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

O'Brien at the controls as Riker and Geordi arrive together... Geordi carrying a work kit...

RIKER

Mister Data and our guest appear to be tardy...

O'BRIEN

Sir, Commander Shelby and Data beamed down to the planet surface an hour ago...

RIKER

(reacts, angry)

On whose authority?

O'BRIEN

(blinks)

On... hers, sir.

Riker exchanges a look with Geordi as they get in position on the transporter...

12 EXT. PLANET SURFACE - DAWN (OPTICAL)

Shelby and Data are examining exposed rock strata with their tricorders as Riker and Geordi MATERIALIZE.

SHELBY

Morning. Early bird gets the worm, eh? We've had some interesting results...

RIKER

(interrupting, burning)

Commander Shelby...

(he pauses, will not do this in front of the other officers)

Walk with me, Commander.

It is an order. She obeys. Geordi and Data exchange a look...

12 CONTINUED:

DATA

I believe Commander Shelby erred... there are no known avifaunal or crawling vermicular lifeforms on Jouret Four.

GEORDI

That's... not what she meant, Data... but, uh, you're right, she erred...

On Data's reaction...

13 ANGLE - MOVING WITH RIKER AND SHELBY

SHELBY

(responding)

I'm sorry... I woke up early and I saw a weather system was moving in... it could have affected the soil readings...

RIKER

So without any regard to the risk of coming down alone...

SHELBY

Really, Commander... if we ran into the Borg, two extra bodies wouldn't've made a hell of a difference, would they? We had three hours before the storm front hit, less than two hours now. Data was available. I took him. We came. I don't see your problem...

RIKER

My problem, Commander, is I expect to be notified before there's a change in my orders...

SHELBY

(tight)

Noted for future reference. Do you wish to hear my report, sir?

RIKER

Go ahead.

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13 CONTINUED:

SHELBY

The soil contains the same
magnetic-resonance traces...
That's our footprint. There's
no doubt any more. It's the Borg.

On Riker's reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

14 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

In orbit. The transport ship is gone.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, Stardate 43998.5.
With confirmation of the Borg's
presence in Federation space,
Admiral Hanson has returned to
Starbase three two four to discuss
strategy with Starfleet Command.
Lieutenant Commander Shelby
remains on board to continue
tactical preparations.

15 INT. CAPT. READY ROOM

Riker and Picard.

RIKER

... a standing Yellow Alert...
all Federation and allied outposts
have been warned... Ops will
continue to monitor long range
sensors... I've assigned Data,
La Forge and Mister Crusher to
work with Commander Shelby.

Picard nods... a beat.

PICARD

Very good, Number One. You've
covered all the bases. As usual.
(beat)
What's your impression of Shelby?

RIKER

She knows her stuff, Captain.

Picard notes a vague hesitation in his attitude.

PICARD

She has your full confidence...

RIKER

Well, I think she needs...
supervision.

(MORE)

15 CONTINUED:

RIKER (Cont'd)

She takes the initiative a little too... easily. Sometimes with risks.

Picard nods, smiles slightly...

PICARD

Sounds a little like a young lieutenant commander I once recruited as my first officer.

RIKER

(returns smile)

Perhaps.

And all this is played with great warmth and personal connection...

PICARD

You're the best officer I've ever served with, Will.

Riker crinkles his forehead, nods, thanks.

PICARD

(most gentle)

But what are you still doing here?

RIKER

(reacts)

Sir?

PICARD

I hear you've been offered the Melbourne.

Riker acknowledges, believes the captain will be pleased when he says --

RIKER

I've decided not to pursue the commission at this time.

But Picard surprises him by not showing pleasure, but rather discomfort with the decision.

PICARD

She's a fine ship, Will.

15 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

She's not the Enterprise.

(beat)

With all due respect, sir, you
need me. Particularly now.

PICARD

Starfleet needs good captains.
Particularly now. I cannot keep
you to myself forever.

Picard takes a long beat... this is most difficult.

PICARD

I want you to reconsider your
decision.

RIKER

(reacts)

Are you asking me to leave,
Captain?

PICARD

I'm asking you to look at your
career objectively and make the
best decision.

(beat)

I know it's hard to walk away.
But you're ready to work without
a net, my friend. You're ready
to make the life and death
decisions a captain must make.
And, hard as it is to accept, if
you choose to leave, the
Enterprise will go on just fine
without you.

Riker looks hard at Picard and on that look...

15A INT. TEN-FORWARD

Troi and Riker at a table. Riker is troubled,
confused.

RIKER

What am I still doing here,
Deanna? I've pushed myself hard
to get this far...

(glancing at her)

... sacrificed a lot.

(MORE)

15A CONTINUED:

RIKER (Cont'd)

I've always said I wanted my own command. And yet something's holding me back. Is it wrong to want to stay... ?

TROI

What do you think?

RIKER

(shakes his head,
doesn't know)

Maybe I'm just afraid of the big chair.

TROI

I don't think so.

RIKER

(unconvinced)

The captain says Shelby reminds him of the way I used to be. And he's right. She comes in here, full of drive and ambition, impatient, taking risks... I look at her and I wonder whatever happened to those things in me? I liked those things in me.

(shakes his head)

I've lost something.

TROI

(suppressing a smile)

You mean you're older, more experienced... a little more seasoned...

RIKER

(grins)

"Seasoned". What a horrible thing to say to a man.

TROI

I don't think you've lost a thing... and you've gained a lot more than you realize. You're much more comfortable with yourself than you used to be...

15A CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

Maybe that's the problem. Could
be I'm too comfortable here.

TROI

I'm not sure I know what that
means.

(But I do know that..)

You're happy here... happier than
I've ever known you to be. It
really comes down to a simple
question -- what do you want, Will
Riker?

Riker laughs to himself.

TROI

What?

RIKER

Stupid. An old song I heard when
I was a kid. Keeps running
through my mind...

(off her look, he begins
to sing)

"Didja ever have the feeling that
you wanted to go... still had the
feeling that you wanted to stay...
You knew it was right... wasn't
wrong... still you knew you
wouldn't be very long... it's
tough to have the feeling that
you wanted to go... "

15B ANGLE - GUINAN

moving by with a tray of drinks reacts as she hears
Riker...

RIKER

(continuing)

"... still had the feeling that
you wanted to stay... start to
go... change your mind... "

He stops as he realizes Guinan is looking at him...

GUINAN

You start on Friday -- two shows
a night, matinee on Wednesday.

15B CONTINUED:

RIKER

I play the trombone too...

She nods, and walks on...

16 INT. ENGINEERING - CLOSE ON MONITOR

shows an Okudagram, a graphic representation of the Borg ship...

SHELBY (O.S.)

... a manipulation effect in the Borg ship's subspace field... a definite pattern -- at four-point-eight minute intervals during your first confrontation with them.

17 ANGLE - AT THE POOL TABLE (OPTICAL)

Shelby, Riker, Geordi, Wesley, Data and three other supernumeraries, at least one other woman in the group. It's been a long day... fatigue is clear on all faces...

GEORDI

Might indicate high-output auxiliary generators kicking in.

SHELBY

(acknowledges)

One theory is that their systems are decentralized with redundant power sources located throughout the ship.

DATA

It is a reasonable conclusion. Borg technology has given each member of their society the ability to interface and function collectively. It is likely they would construct their ship with the same philosophy.

WESLEY

(shakes his head)

Knock out one generator and another takes over without interruption.

17 CONTINUED:

RIKER

What kind of damage would we have
to do to shut them down... ?

SHELBY

Projections suggest a Borg ship
like this one could continue to
function effectively even if
seventy-eight percent of it was
inoperable.

Reactions.

WESLEY

(grim)

And our best shot barely scratched
the surface.

Geordi in particular is stumped... moves to a monitor,
presses panels that put up several design schemes...

GEORDI

From what I've seen, I can't
believe any of your new weapons
systems can be ready in less than
eighteen months, Commander.

SHELBY

(acknowledges)

We've been projecting twenty-four.

RIKER

(looking at the designs)

Is there anything here we can try
to adapt to our current defense
systems... ?

GEORDI

(studying them intently)

We'll have to look through the
specs again.

(sighs, tired)

I don't know. My mind's turned
to clay.

WESLEY

Mine too.

He inadvertently looks at Data... there's a beat of
visual humor -- obviously Data's mind could run all
night. Shelby intends to push them until they fall...
moving to the computer, calling up specs...

17 CONTINUED: (2)

SHELBY

I think we should look at
modifying the plasma phaser
design...

Riker notices the excessive fatigue on everyone's
faces...

RIKER

Commander, I think we should call
it a night.

A beat. Shelby reacts without eye contact... there's
a crisis, how can he think about breaking for the
night? She keeps on working at the computer... eyes
on the screen. Restrained --

SHELBY

All right. Anyone who's really
that tired... if you want to
leave...

Overlapping --

WESLEY

No, that's okay...

GEORDI

Go ahead, Commander...

SHELBY

(quickly back to work)
What would happen if we take the
frequency klystron from the
existing unit...

Riker interrupts, firm, but none of this ever gets loud
--

RIKER

We'll break here. That's an
order. We'll reconvene at oh five
hundred...

SHELBY

Sir, if you'll allow me to
continue with Mister Data, who
does not require rest...

RIKER

You need rest, Commander.

17 CONTINUED: (3)

SHELBY

If we have a confrontation with
the Borg without improving our
defense systems...

RIKER

If we have a confrontation, I
don't want a crew fighting the
Borg at the same time they're
fighting their own fatigue...
Dismissed.

Their eyes meet in conflict. She EXITS.

18
thru OMITTED
19

20 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

In orbit.

21 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

Picard, Riker, Shelby, Data, Geordi, Worf, Beverly.
On the monitor Admiral Hanson is addressing them.

HANSON (MONITOR)

At nineteen hundred hours
yesterday, the USS Lalo
departed Zeta Alpha Two on a
freight run to Sentinel Minor
Four. At twenty-two hundred hours
and twelve minutes, a distress
signal was received at Starbase
one five seven. The Lalo reported
contact with an alien vessel...

(with emphasis)

... described as cube-shaped. The
distress signal ended abruptly.
She has not been heard from since.

Reactions.

PICARD

How long to get there at warp
nine, Mister Data?

DATA

One hour, seventeen minutes, sir.

21 CONTINUED:

PICARD

Make it so.

Data acknowledges, rises and EXITS.

HANSON

We're coming with every available
starship to assist, Captain. But
the closest help is six days away.

PICARD

(dry)

We'll try to occupy them pending
your arrival, Admiral.

HANSON

I know you will. Hanson out.

RIKER

All hands will stand to battle
stations...

PICARD

Commander Shelby, status of
defense preparations?

SHELBY

Mister La Forge has a plan to
modulate shield nutation...
hopefully, that'll hold them off
for awhile.

GEORDI

At the same time, we're retuning
phasers to higher EM-base
emitting frequencies -- we'll try
to disrupt their subspace field.

PICARD

Your assessment of our potential
effectiveness?

GEORDI

Shot in the dark, Captain. Best
we can do for now.

PICARD

(acknowledges)

Dismissed.

22 OMITTED

22A EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

at warp.

23 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard, Riker, Worf, Data, Wesley at their positions...
Shelby is also on the bridge...

WORF

Sir, reading an unidentified
vessel just entering sensor range,
bearing two-one-zero mark
one-five-one...

PICARD

Hail them, Mister Worf...

WORF

No response, sir...

PICARD

Move to intercept.

WORF

(beat, reacting to
console)

Sir, the vessel has already
changed course to intercept us.
Approaching at... warp nine point
three... Entering visual
range...

PICARD

On screen.

24 ANGLE - VIEW SCREEN (OPTICAL)

Long range... a small dot...

PICARD

Magnify.

The shot changes to a closer angle -- it is the Borg
ship.

PICARD

Mister Worf, dispatch a subspace
message to Admiral Hanson -- we
have engaged the Borg.

STAR TREK: "Best of Both Worlds" - REV. 4/6/90 - ACT TWO 25.

24 CONTINUED:

And on reactions...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

25 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise and the Borg ship face each other. Both ships have dropped out of warp.

26 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

We are now at Red Alert.

WORF

Captain, you are being hailed.

PICARD

I am?

WORF

Yes, Captain. By name.

RIKER

Data, is it the same ship we faced at J-two-five?

DATA

Uncertain, Commander. However, dimensions are precisely the same.

PICARD

On screen.

He takes a defiant pose. The interior of the Borg ship appears on the viewscreen -- a great chamber with stacks and stacks of thousands of slots in which are individual Borg.

PICARD

I am Jean-Luc...

Speaking with a hundred voices --

BORG

Jean-Luc Picard, captain of the Starship Enterprise, registry NCC-1701D, you will lower shields and prepare to transport yourself aboard our vessel. If you do not cooperate, we will destroy your ship.

26 CONTINUED:

Picard reacts, does not respond to the demand.

PICARD

You have committed acts of aggression against the United Federation of Planets. If you do not immediately withdraw...

BORG

You will surrender yourself or we will destroy your ship. Your defensive capabilities are unable to withstand us.

Riker signals Worf to mute transmission.

RIKER

(to Picard)

What the hell could they want with you?

SHELBY

I thought they weren't interested in human lifeforms... only our technology.

PICARD

Their priorities seem to have changed. Open channel.

(to the viewscreen)

We have developed new defense capabilities since our last meeting and we are prepared to use them if you do not withdraw from Federation space. If you do so immediately, I will agree to arrange a conference of our peoples at a neutral location.

27 INT. ENGINEERING

On Geordi taking readings...

GEORDI

(to comm)

Shields are being probed... I'm modulating nutation...

STAR TREK: "Best of Both Worlds" - REV. 4/6/90 - ACT THREE 28.

28 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

As the Borg ship sends out their tractor beam... the shields deflect it...

29 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

Sir, the Borg are attempting to lock on to us with their tractor beam...

PICARD

Load all torpedo bays... ready phasers... target coordinates on the source of the tractor beam...

RIKER

Status of shields...

DATA

Holding...

SHELBY

(encouraged)

The nutation modulation has them confused...

RIKER

(cautious)

They have the ability to analyze and adapt, Commander...

Suddenly the ship shakes violently...

INTERCUT:

29A INT. ENGINEERING

Geordi scurrying around trying to make adjustments in vain...

GEORDI

Shield modulation has failed... they've locked on...

WORF

Shields are being drained... ninety per cent... eighty...

29A CONTINUED:

GEORDI
Trying to recalibrate nutation...
damn...

WORF
Shields have failed.

PICARD
Fire all weapons...

30 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

An extraordinary sequence... as the Enterprise is
grabbed by the tractor beam... we give them everything
we've got... the Borg ship takes full impact and still
the beam has us...

31 INT. ENGINEERING

GEORDI
Their subspace field is intact...
new phaser frequencies had no
impact...

INTERCUT:

32 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

RIKER
Reverse engines...

GEORDI
Full reverse... we're not
moving...

PICARD
Fire at will...

WORF
Launching torpedos... phaser
spread continuing...

DATA
Still no damage to the Borg
vessel, sir...

33 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

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

STAR TREK: "Best of Both Worlds" - REV. 4/6/90 - ACT THREE 30.

34 INT. ENGINEERING

A deafening crack of thunder... the ship shakes...
Geordi looks up...

COMPUTER VOICE
Warning. Outer hull breach.

INTERCUT:

35 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF
They're cutting into the hull...
Engineering section...

RIKER
Geordi... evacuate Engineering...

36 INT. ENGINEERING

People running... the thunder continuing... on the move
--

GEORDI
Computer. Evacuation sequence...

COMPUTER VOICE
Redirecting Engineering control
to bridge. Sealing doors to core
chamber...

GEORDI
Move it people!

The door is sliding down... and as he runs the hell out
of there...

COMPUTER VOICE
Warning. Inner hull failing.
Decompression danger, deck
thirty-six, section four.
Sealing Main Engineering.

36A OMITTED

37 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

SHELBY

Data, fluctuate phaser resonance
frequencies... random settings...
keep changing them... don't give
them time to adapt...

38 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise fires another furious round... this time
with fluctuating laser frequencies... unlike our usual.
Unbroken beam, the beam is divided into "dots and
Dashes" with slight color changes... and finally the
Borg tractor breaks off...

38A INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The ship shakes with the release.

WORF

The tractor beam has been
released.

PICARD

Warp nine. Course one-five-one
mark three-three-zero... engage...

39 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

warps away... the Borg ship follows quickly...

40 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

They are in pursuit, Captain.

PICARD

Maintain course.

Geordi ENTERS from the turbolift...

RIKER

Damage report, Geordi.

GEORDI

(still in shock)
Hull rupture in Main
Engineering... damage is heavy...
(MORE)

40 CONTINUED:

GEORDI (Cont'd)

We lost a lot of good people down
there.

DATA

Eleven dead... eight more
unaccounted for, Captain.

Moving to the Engineering station, taking readings...

RIKER

(to com)

Repair teams to Engineering...
seal hull breach...

GEORDI

They didn't get to the core...
I can control functions from
here...

WESLEY

Approaching the Paulson Nebula,
sir...

PICARD

Drop to impulse... take us in,
Ensign...

41 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Moving at impulse into the solar nebula, swirling
clouds...

42 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - INCLUDE MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

as we whiz by large rocks and clumpy material...

43 ANGLE - WESLEY

drawing on all of his navigational talents... Picard
moves up next to him...

WESLEY

The field is getting too dense,
sir...

PICARD

Steady... Mister Data, analysis
of the nebula cloud...

43 CONTINUED:

DATA

Eighty-two percent Dilithium hydroxyls... manganese, chromium. It should provide an effective screen against their sensors, sir...

44 PICARD

PICARD

Prepare to take us in, Mister Crusher. Now. Mister La Forge, prepare to reverse engines, full stop.

45 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise moves into the spiral cloud and disappearing from view.

45A EXT. SPACE - THE BORG (OPTICAL)

slows at the cloud's periphery, does not go in.

46 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

The Borg ship is continuing scans... attempting to locate us...

PICARD

Good. As long as they're looking for us... they can't hurt anyone else.

RIKER

Shut down all active sensors, passive scanners only. Deflectors to minimum emissions.

PICARD

We'll maintain position.
(looks at Riker and Shelby)
Until we have a better idea.

47 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Barely visible through the dense cloud.

48 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE - CLOSE ON MONITOR (OPTICAL)

Showing a silent replay of the Borg ship as seen from the Enterprise...

SHELBY (O.S.)

Time index five-one-four... Data started to fluctuate phaser resonance frequencies... the Borg's beam breaks contact... Freeze picture.

49 ANGLE

Riker is at the head of the table, Wesley, Geordi and Data are with Shelby. They are reporting progress to him.

SHELBY

Take a close look, Commander...
Mister La Forge?
(please narrate)

50 MONITOR - FREEZE FRAME (OPTICAL)

The same shot in slow motion... there is a slight wobble in the entire Borg power system.

GEORDI (O.S.)

There's a two percent power drop, just for an instant... but it's system-wide... The phaser frequency spread was in a high narrow band.

51 ANGLE - WIDE

DATA

Conceivably, the ship's power distribution nodes are vulnerable to those frequencies.

51 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

If we can generate a concentrated burst of energy with that same frequency distribution... I mean a lot more than anything our phasers or photon torpedos could provide...

RIKER

How do we do that?

WESLEY

The main deflector dish.

GEORDI

It's the only component of the Enterprise designed to channel that much power at controlled frequencies.

SHELBY

Unfortunately, there is one slight detail -- in the process, the blast completely destroys the Enterprise as well.

RIKER

(muses)

But if we could get far enough away... increase the deflector range...

SHELBY

(nods)

It could work. In the meantime, we should retune all phasers, including hand units, to the same frequency.

RIKER

(acknowledges)

Proceed. I'll inform the Captain...

SHELBY

There's one other recommendation I'd like to make, Commander. Separate the saucer section... assign a skeleton crew to create a diversion...

51 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

(shakes his head)

We may need power from the saucer
impulse engines...

SHELBY

But it would give them more than
one target to worry about.

RIKER

(beat)

No, it's too great a risk...

SHELBY

I'd like the captain to make that
decision, sir.

RIKER

(cool)

I bring all alternatives to the
captain's attention, Commander.

(dismissing them)

That'll be all.

As the others EXIT, Geordi lingers a moment...

GEORDI

I'll need to install
higher-capacity power transfers
to the deflector dish,
Commander...

RIKER

How long...

GEORDI

Better part of a day.

Riker acknowledges, stands, still bristling about
Shelby...

RIKER

She gets a full head of steam up,
doesn't she...

GEORDI

Yessir... she's... a formidable
presence to say the least. But
I'm convinced she can help us
here, Commander...

51 CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER
I am too, Geordi. Don't worry
about it. I can handle Shelby.

Riker nods and they EXIT.

52 INT. BRIDGE

Riker walks to the Ready Room door and rings the
chime... Worf in command.

PICARD'S VOICE
Come.

53 ANGLE - THE DOOR

slides open and as Riker steps forward, he reacts as
he sees Shelby with Picard.

54 INT. CAPT. READY ROOM - CONTINUOUS

PICARD
Come in, Number One... Commander
Shelby was just telling me of your
concerns about her plan...

RIKER
I'm sorry that she troubled you,
sir... I already informed her...

PICARD
Yes, I entirely agree with you.
It's not the time. But I am
afraid the time may eventually
come when greater risks are
required. I'd like you to
consider her plan as a fall-back
position and make the necessary
preparations.

RIKER
Very good, sir.

55 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker and Shelby EXIT the Ready Room and you can cut
the tension with a knife... she moves to the turbolift
and he's on her heels.

56 INT. TURBOLIFT

As they ENTER...

SHELBY
Deck eight. Battle bridge.

The doors close. Shelby avoids his eyes. No guilt from her. Just unstoppable.

RIKER
(to comm)
Halt.
(to Shelby)
You and I have to talk, Commander.

SHELBY
You never ordered me not to discuss this with the captain...

RIKER
You disagree with me, fine. You want to take it to the captain, fine. Through me. You do an end run around me again, I'll snap you back so hard, you'll think you're a first year cadet again.

SHELBY
May I speak frankly, sir?

RIKER
By all means.

SHELBY
You're in my way.

RIKER
Really? How terrible for you.

SHELBY
All you know how to do is play it safe... I guess that's why someone like you sits in the shadow of a great man for as long as you have, passing up one command after another.

(to comm)
Proceed to deck eight.

RIKER
When it comes to this ship, to this crew, you're damned right I'll play it safe.

56 CONTINUED:

SHELBY

If you can't make the big
decisions, Commander, I suggest
you make room for someone who can.

The door opens and she EXITS. On Riker's reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

57 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

hiding in the dust cloud in the nebula... moving back to find the Borg ship hovering over the swirl.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's log, supplemental. The Enterprise remains concealed in the dust cloud. And to my surprise, the Borg have maintained their position, waiting for us to come out of hiding. I have no explanation for their special interest in me or this ship.

57A INT. ENGINEERING

Much activity. Repairs are continuing... supernumeraries working at the last patches in the breach area... at consoles, Geordi, Wesley, Shelby and Data huddle and compare notes... as Picard ENTERS, taking a slow, respectful inspection. The crew members look up to acknowledge Picard, who just nods, "carry-on" as he passes through...

PICARD (V.O.)

We continue to prepare our defenses for the inevitable confrontation. But, I must admit, on this night I contemplate the distinct possibility that no defense may be adequate against this enemy...

57B INT. TEN-FORWARD (OPTICAL)

Dark and deserted. The view out the windows blinded by the nebula fog. Picard ENTERS, walking slowly... takes a long look...

GUINAN (O.S.)

Trouble sleeping?

Picard turns...

57C ANGLE - GUINAN

at the bar

PICARD

Something of a tradition,
Guinan... touring the ship before
a battle...

GUINAN

Before a hopeless battle, if I
remember the tradition correctly.

Picard moves to the bar.

PICARD

Not necessarily. Nelson toured
the HMS Victory before
Trafalgar...

GUINAN

But Nelson didn't come home from
Trafalgar, did he?

PICARD

No, but the battle was won.

GUINAN

And you, Picard, do you expect
this battle to be won?

PICARD

We may yet prevail. It is a
conceit but a healthy one.

(beat)

I wonder if the Emperor Honorius
watching the Visigoths coming over
the seventh hill could truly
realize that the Roman Empire was
about to fall. This is really
just another page of history,
isn't it? Will this be the end
of our civilization?

(shrugs)

... Turn the page.

GUINAN

It is not the end.

PICARD

You say that with remarkable
assuredness.

57C CONTINUED:

GUINAN

With experience. When the Borg destroyed my world, my people scattered throughout the universe. But we survived. And so will humanity. As long as there is a handful left to keep the spirit alive. You will prevail. Even if it takes a millennium.

Picard nods with appreciation for her... and then the ship shakes and they react, turn to see --

57D ANGLE - THE WINDOWS (OPTICAL)

somewhere beyond the fog, bright explosions are visible...

WORF'S COM VOICE

Captain Picard, report to the bridge.

On the move...

PICARD

(keys insignia)

On my way, Lieutenant.

And EXITS.

58 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Picard ENTERS... Riker, Worf watch the viewscreen as the explosions continue periodically. Supernumeraries at conn and ops.

RIKER

They're some kind of magnetometric-guided charges.

As one "depth charge" explodes perilously close by...

PICARD

Status of shields.

WORF

Back to forty-eight percent, Captain.

58 CONTINUED:

PICARD

(to comm)

Mister La Forge, I may have to
take us out of the nebula... I'll
need all the power you can give
me.

Another huge explosion rattles us...

59 INT. ENGINEERING

Data, Wesley, Shelby working at stations in the
background.

GEORDI

Engines are ready, Captain.
Recommend you adjust shield
harmonics to favor the upper EM
band when you proceed...

PICARD'S COM VOICE

Acknowledged.

And this time a direct hit...

60 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

Direct hit... deck nine...

RIKER

Damage report...

WORF

Structural latching system
integrity breached...

PICARD

Take us out of here, Number One...

RIKER

Fire up the engines... half
impulse until we clear the
nebula... then punch it to warp
nine.

PICARD

Ready phasers... load forward
torpedo bays...

RIKER

Engage.

61 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

moves out of the cloud... immediately the Borg ship follows...

62 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

WORF

Borg tractor beam is attempting to lock on...

PICARD

Fire at will. Continue rotating shield frequ...

WORF

Shields are failing...

The ship is rocked as the tractor beam locks on... people are almost knocked down...

WORF

Tractor beam has locked on.

RIKER

They're holding us...

A Borg MATERIALIZES...

Borg #1 looks around, identifies Picard, moves calmly toward him... Worf fires his phaser... the Borg's force field is ineffective... it breaks down and the Borg is blown down... immediately two more Borg MATERIALIZE... one by the fallen Borg, another behind Picard... Worf fires at the Borg (#2) near Picard. But this time the Borg's force field has changed color and repels the phasers...

RIKER

It's no use... they've already adapted to the new frequencies...

Riker charges Borg #2 going for Picard but the Borg easily sends Riker crashing against a far wall, and grabs Picard. Worf moves toward Picard as...

62A OMITTED

62B BORG #3

removes parts of the dead Borg #1...

62C ANGLE - PICARD (OPTICAL)

Worf reaches him just as he DEMATERIALIZES along with Borg #2 and Borg #3... a beat later, dead Borg#1 withers away into dust... and...

62D WORF

quickly moves back to Tactical...

WORF

The Borg ship is disengaging...
leaving at warp speed...

RIKER

(to conn)
Maintain pursuit...

WORF

Borg vessel has reached warp
nine... nine-point-four...
nine-point-six...

RIKER

Stay with them.
(to comm)
Riker to O'Brien. Can you get
a fix on the captain?

O'BRIEN'S COM VOICE

Negative, sir. There's some kind
of interference. I can't lock
in on his signal.

RIKER

Senior officers report to the
bridge.

WORF

Sir, the coordinates they've
set... they're on a direct
course... to sector zero-zero-one.
The Terran system.

RIKER

(reacts)
Earth.

On Riker's reaction...

63 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in pursuit of the Borg ship.

64 INT. BORG SHIP

Picard is escorted by two Borgs... he reacts as he sees
--

65 OMITTED

66 INT. BORG SHIP (MATTE SHOT)

The same massive chamber we saw on the Main Viewer
earlier... thousands of Borg lined up... as Picard
ENTERS. They speak with a thousand deafening voices:

BORG

Captain Jean-Luc Picard, you lead
the strongest ship of the
Federation Starfleet. You speak
for your people.

PICARD

I have nothing to say to you, and
I will resist you with my last
ounce of strength.

BORG

Strength is irrelevant.
Resistance is futile. We wish to
improve ourselves. We will add
your biological and technological
distinctiveness to our own. Your
culture will adapt to service ours.

PICARD

Impossible. My culture is based
on freedom and self-determination.

BORG

Freedom is irrelevant. Self-determination
is irrelevant. You must comply.

PICARD

We would rather die.

BORG

Death is irrelevant.

66 CONTINUED:

PICARD

What is it you wish of me?

BORG

Your archaic cultures are authority driven. To facilitate our introduction into your societies, it has been decided that a human voice will speak for us in all communications. You have been chosen to be that voice.

On Picard's reaction...

67 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in pursuit of the Borg vessel.

68 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker, Shelby, Geordi, Data, Troi, Worf, Beverly, Wesley. Supernumeraries are at Conn and Ops.

WORF

They're leading us into the heart of our own defenses...

GEORDI

So far, they haven't had any reason to worry about our defenses...

WESLEY

Commander, if the Borg stay at warp nine-point-six, we'll be forced to discontinue pursuit and power down in less than three hours.

DATA

Two hours, forty minutes and three seconds.

RIKER

(to Geordi)

How soon before the deflector is ready?

68 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

We're close. Few hours maybe...

(before Riker has to
tell him)

I know I'll get it done in two...
somehow... but Commander, I need
serious power from the warp
engines to make this weapon work.
We're using all we've got just
to keep up with them...

SHELBY

We've got to get that ship down
to impulse.

RIKER

I'm leading an away team over
there to get the captain back.
We'll find a way to bring them
out of warp...

(orders)

Ensign Crusher... continue to
assist Mister La Forge...
Commander Shelby, you will take
the bridge and coordinate with
Starfleet... Data, Worf, Doctor
Crusher, you're with me...

SHELBY

(protesting)

Excuse me, sir... with my
knowledge of the Borg...

RIKER

(not now)

Those are my orders, Commander.

Shelby blinks. Troi fills the breach.

TROI

Commander Riker...

(beat)

It is inappropriate for you to
lead the away team. Until the
return of Captain Picard, you are
in command of the Enterprise.
We are in a state of war. Your
place is on the bridge.

68 CONTINUED: (2)

Riker frowns... every bit of his soul wants to lead the charge to the rescue... and suddenly he feels what it takes to command... to delegate authority, to think of the greater needs... but it's frustrating as hell.

RIKER

(softer)

Commander Shelby, you will lead
the away team.

And he sinks into the big chair...

RIKER

Make it so.

The others scramble and...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

69 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Still at warp... pursuing the Borg ship.

RIKER (V.O.)

First officer's log, supplemental.
Our pursuit of the Borg continues
at high warp on a course that
will take us to the very core of
the Federation. The devastation
they could bring is beyond
imagination.

70 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

Shelby, Data and Beverly wait with O'Brien as Worf
arrives, hands out phasers...

WORF

These phasers have been retuned.
Each has a different frequency
spanning the upper EM band.

SHELBY

All right... a reminder... we only
get to use each of these once,
maybe twice before the Borg learn
to adapt. Don't fire until you
have to...

BEVERLY

What kind of resistance can we
expect?

(Beverly wasn't around for the Borg last year.)

DATA

At our last encounter, the Borg
virtually ignored us when we
beamed aboard their vessel,
Doctor. They clearly did not
consider our being there a
threat.

SHELBY

That could very well change,
however, if we start interfering
with their plans.

70 CONTINUED:

They move to the transporter...

SHELBY

Shelby to bridge. Away team
ready.

INTERCUT:

71 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker, Troi and supernumeraries.

RIKER

(to com)

We've got fifty-eight minutes
before we have to power down and
disengage.

SHELBY

Understood.

RIKER

Proceed.

(quick)

Commander, no unnecessary risks.
If it becomes clear you can't
succeed, I want you back here,
alive... I don't want any dead
heroes. Clear?

SHELBY

Very clear, sir. Shelby out.

O'BRIEN

We've matched warp velocity for
transport, Commander.

SHELBY

Energize.

72 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

Shelby, Data, Worf and Beverly MATERIALIZE...

73 CLOSER

assume a defensive posture. There is no resistance.
Many of the Borg are in stasis. Occasionally, one
walks by and ignores the away team.

73 CONTINUED:

WORF
(checking tricorder)
Tricorder functions are minimal.

SHELBY
Any signs of human life?

WORF
Inconclusive.

He continues to make adjustments on the tricorder.
Beverly gets her first look at the Borg up close and
personal... studying the gridwork structures...

BEVERLY
(awe)
Look at this... this is
extraordinary.

DATA
(acknowledges)
These appear to be some kind of
power waveguide conduits which
allow them to work collectively
as they perform ship functions.

SHELBY
There's no way to take out enough
of these to slow them down.

DATA
(agreeing)
The decentralized power system
makes it virtually impossible.

Cautiously moving forward...

BEVERLY
(studying the
configuration)
What about looking at it... from
the mosquito's point of view.

DATA
(puzzled)
An interesting metaphor, Doctor.
What is your idea?

BEVERLY
If we sting them in a tender
spot... at least we might get them
to stop a minute to scratch.

73 CONTINUED: (2)

Data and Shelby exchange a glance... not a bad plan.
As they move into an intersection to see the awesome
conduit box...

DATA

Distribution nodes.

SHELBY

If we take out a few of these,
it just might make them scratch...

Data acknowledges as Worf picks up something on his
tricorder.

WORF

The captain's communicator...
it is still activated.

BEVERLY

(keying insignia)

Crusher to Picard, can you hear
me, Captain...

No response.

SHELBY

Can you locate it, Worf?

WORF

(checking)

This way...

He leads them down a corridor...

73A INT. READY ROOM (OPTICAL)

Admiral Hanson on the monitor... Riker notably
standing, not sitting in the captain's chair...

RIKER

I strongly recommend redeploying
all available defenses to protect
sector zero-zero-one, Admiral...

HANSON

(acknowledges)

We're moving to intercept at Wolf
three five nine. We'll make our
stand there. How much longer can
you maintain pursuit?

73A CONTINUED:

RIKER

Twenty-two minutes if they stay
at current speed. If we can't
bring them out of warp, we'll
do as much damage as we can before
we have to disengage.

HANSON

(nods)

Picard?

RIKER

Nothing yet, sir.

74 OMITTED

74A INT. BORG SHIP

Down another corridor, Worf leading the way with his
tricorder... he stops... a series of large drawers line
one wall... it might almost remind us of a morgue...

WORF

In here.

An exchange of concerned glances... Data moves forward
and pulls out the heavy drawer... they react as they
see inside --

75 ANGLE - PICARD'S UNIFORM

folded neatly, the communicator is visible. His empty
boots.

75A RESUME - SHELBY

SHELBY

Shelby to Enterprise.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Go ahead.

SHELBY

We've found the captain's uniform.
And his communicator.

75B INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker frowns... exchanges a worried look with Troi...

SHELBY'S COM VOICE
We're resuming our search.

Behind him Wesley and Geordi ENTER from the
turbolift... as Riker sees them --

RIKER
(to com)
Stand by, Commander.

WESLEY
We're in business.

GEORDI
It'll burn out the main
deflector... but it'll be one hell
of a bang.

RIKER
Radiation danger?

WESLEY
We'll need to evacuate the entire
forward half of the secondary
hull. And the lower three decks
of the saucer.

TROI
I'll see to that.

She moves off the bridge.

RIKER
(to com)
Commander Shelby... we have only
seventeen minutes of warp power
left. Do what you can to get
them out of warp.

75C INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

The away team continues to move cautiously into an
intersection.

75C CONTINUED:

SHELBY

(to comm)

Acknowledged. Shelby out.

(to the team)

Let's take out some of these
distribution nodes and see what
happens...

(beat)

Get ready. This may rile up our
friends.

Data fires his phaser at the top of the conduit box...
nothing... then Worf and Data fire together... this
time, the conduit box shorts out and sparks fly...
they move quickly out...

76 INT. BORG SHIP

The Borg are stirring.

77

thru OMITTED

79

80 ANGLE - THE AWAY TEAM

reacts as the Borg begin to exit their shelves... as
many as we can muster... they see our guys... and move
calmly toward them... we retreat...

80A INTO ANOTHER INTERSECTION (OPTICAL)

and Worf and Data shoot out another conduit box... more
sparks...

81 ANGLE (OPTICAL)

As more Borgs exit their shelves... see us... come at
us...

SHELBY

Ready phasers...

They raise their weapons... the Borg move in on them...

SHELBY

Fire.

Shelby and Data fire one direction... Worf and Beverly
the other...

82 ONE SET OF BORGS (OPTICAL)

go down...

83 ANOTHER SET OF BORGS (OPTICAL)

go down... but more come right behind, climbing over them...

84 THE AWAY TEAM (OPTICAL)

moves down a clear corridor...

SHELBY

Enterprise, encountering
resistance, prepare to beam us
back on my signal...

... into another intersection... Data and Worf fire
and destroy a third conduit box.

85

thru OMITTED

87

88 INT. BORG SHIP

A portion of the lights fail...

89 THE AWAY TEAM (OPTICAL)

is cloaked in shadows... the sparks creating almost a
strobe effect...

89A ANGLE - MORE BORGS (OPTICAL)

coming... the away team fire phasers... the Borg have
adapted... none of the phasers affect them this time...
we retreat again.

SHELBY

Enterprise... beam us...

WORF

Wait! Look --

He points... and

90

thru OMITTED

92

93 ANGLE - ANOTHER ROW OF BORGS EMERGING FROM THEIR
SLOTS

in the strobe effect... and one of them at the far
end... is Picard... seen in profile, he looks normal.

94 THE AWAY TEAM

WORF

Captain!

95 PICARD

turns slowly, calmly... and push in as he does to see
he has been turned into a Borg. Half his face is
gone... replaced with machinery.

96 REACTIONS - CLOSEUPS

of the away team... stunned.

97 PICARD

moves toward them... with the Borg as they surround...

98 THE AWAY TEAM (OPTICAL)

Worf bursts forward trying to get to his captain...
is repelled violently by a Borg aura around Picard...
falls to the floor.

SHELBY

Enterprise, get us out of here.

As sparking effects continue from the damage to the
distribution nodes, they DEMATERIALIZE.

99 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Riker, Troi, Wes at Conn... Geordi at Engineering
station.

WESLEY

Sir, they did it... the Borg ship
is dropping out of warp...

RIKER

Go to impulse.

99 CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Diverting warp energy to main
deflector...

RIKER

Move us to within forty thousand
kilometers, match velocity.
Commence arming sequence...
Increase deflector modulation to
upper frequency band...

The away team ENTERS from the turbolift... Worf moves
to Tactical...

RIKER

The captain?

DATA

Sir, Captain Picard has been
altered by the Borg. We were
unable to retrieve him...

RIKER

Altered... ?

WORF

He is a Borg, sir.

Riker reacts, stunned.

SHELBY

We'll go back... I need more
people... we need to retune the
phasers again... we'll get him
out of there...

GEORDI

Commander, reading subspace field
fluctuations within the Borg ship.
Looks like they're regenerating...
restoring power. They could be
capable of warp any minute.

Riker's mind working... covering the options...

RIKER

Is the deflector ready?

GEORDI

(registering import of
the pending decision)
Ready, sir.

99 CONTINUED: (2)

BEVERLY

Will, he's alive... if we get him
back, I might be able to
restore...

Push in to Riker...

RIKER

This is our only chance to destroy
them... if they get back into warp,
our weapon becomes useless.

SHELBY

We'll go back... we'll sabotage
them again if we have to...

RIKER

(shakes his head)

We can't maintain pursuit. We
don't have the power.

(beat)

Prepare to fire.

SHELBY

At least consult with Starfleet
Command.

(to Worf)

Get Admiral Hanson on subspace...

RIKER

Belay that order, Lieutenant.
There's no time...

WORF

Sir, we are being hailed by the
Borg...

RIKER

On screen.

100
thru OMITTED
101

102 ANGLE (OPTICAL) - VIEWSCREEN

Picard-Borg appears... he speaks with a single but
metallic Borg voice... a version of his own... and
during the speech we

INTERCUT:

103 MATCHING PUSHES TO CLOSEUPS OF RIKER AND PICARD
(OPTICAL)

PICARD/BORG

I am Locutus of Borg. Resistance
is futile. Your life as it has
been is over. From this time
forward, you will service... us.

And on an extreme closeup of Riker... a deep breath,
then firm without raising his voice...

RIKER

Mister Worf... fire.

FREEZE FRAME

SUPER: TO BE CONTINUED

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"The Best of Both Worlds, Part II"
#40274-175

Written by
Michael Piller

Directed by
Cliff Bole

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FINAL DRAFT

JULY 2, 1990

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

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

CAST

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

COMPUTER VOICE

Non-Speaking
SUPERNUMERARIES
MISC. SECURITY PERSONNEL

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

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

SETS

INTERIORS

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

ENTERPRISE SHUTTLE

THE BORG SHIP
INTERIOR CHAMBER
OPERATING ROOM

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

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE
BATTLE SECTION
SAUCER SECTION
THE STARFLEET SHIPS
USS CHEKHOV
USS KYUSHU
USS MELBOURNE
ETC.

ENTERPRISE SHUTTLE

THE BORG SHIP
SATURN (FROM SPACE)

MARS (FROM SPACE)
UNMANNED PODS
EARTH (FROM SPACE)

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

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

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

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

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

FADE IN:

INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL) - LOCUTUS ON SCREEN

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

RIKER

Eyes locked on Locutus. The rumbling grows.

GEORDI

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

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

As the rumble heightens to a roar...

VARIOUS REACTIONS

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

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

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

EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

A forcefield absorbing the continuing blast.

INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

The ship shakes...

CONTINUED:

WORF

The Borg ship is undamaged.

SHELBY

Impossible...

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Warp reactor core
primary coolant failure.

GEORDI

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

Riker never takes his eyes off Locutus...

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Exceeding reaction
chamber thermal limit.

RIKER

Cease fire.

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

GEORDI

Shutting down warp engines.

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

RIKER

(unbelievable)

They couldn't have adapted that
quickly...

LOCUTUS

(on the contrary)

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

(beat)

... Number One.

STAR TREK: "Worlds" Part Two - REV. 7/2/90 - TEASER 3.

7 CONTINUED: (2)

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

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

8 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Alone... The Borg ship is gone.

RIKER (V.O.)

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

9 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE (OPTICAL)

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

RIKER

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

GEORDI

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

Hanson frowns, acknowledges...

HANSON

Well, we'll miss you at the party.

RIKER

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

HANSON

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

9 CONTINUED:

SHELBY

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

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

HANSON

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

SHELBY

Of course, Admiral...

HANSON

He is a casualty of war.

BEVERLY

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

HANSON

(reluctantly
acknowledges)

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

(beat)

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

He sighs, looks down a beat and then up.

9 CONTINUED: (2)

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

Push in on Riker...

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

RIKER
Good luck, Admiral.

HANSON
To us all.

He signs off.

10 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

warping toward Earth.

11 INT. BORG SHIP

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

12 MATTE SHOT - THE BORG SHIP INTERIOR (OPTICAL)

An agonizing human cry echoes through the chamber...

13 A BORG IN HIS COMPARTMENT

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

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

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

14 CONTINUED:

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

15 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

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

RIKER

Come.

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

RIKER

Hi.

TROI

You wanted to see me?

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

RIKER

How's the crew?

TROI

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

RIKER

(understands)

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

15 CONTINUED:

TROI

(acknowledges)

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

RIKER

(a beat)

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

Troi nods sympathetically...

RIKER

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

TROI

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

RIKER

Was there any part of him left,
Deanna?

TROI

(slow)

Yes. I can still sense his
humanity

RIKER

(looks down)

Then you must have sensed his
pain...

Her silence tells him she does.

RIKER

I don't envy your abilities.

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

15 CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER

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

(beat)

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

(beat, warm)

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

TROI

Thank you, Captain.

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

RIKER

(dismissed)

Counselor...

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

16 THE DESK

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

17 INT. TURBOLIFT

as it opens and Riker and Worf ENTER.

RIKER

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

WORF

That would be a great advantage.

17 CONTINUED:

RIKER

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

(to com)

Engineering.

(continuing to Worf)

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

WORF

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

RIKER

I hope it's enough.

17 CONTINUED: (2)

The doors open. They EXIT...

18 OMITTED

19 INT. ENGINEERING

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

GEORDI

Engine control processors are back up...

SHELBY

Accelerator coils are responding normally...

GEORDI

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

SHELBY

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

Riker and Worf ENTER. Seeing Worf --

CONTINUED:

GEORDI

Just the man I need.

(to Riker)

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

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

19 CONTINUED:

RIKER

How soon do we get underway,
Geordi?

GEORDI

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

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

SHELBY

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

RIKER

The warp reactor core?

SHELBY

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

RIKER

Good.

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

SHELBY

Anything else, sir?

RIKER

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

SHELBY

I didn't get Picard.

RIKER

You stopped them. You gave us
our shot.

19 CONTINUED: (2)

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

SHELBY

Sir...

RIKER

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

SHELBY

(quick)

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

Riker reacts, frowns...

RIKER

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

SHELBY

Yes.

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

SHELBY

(continuing)

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

RIKER

You also have a lot to learn, Commander.

SHELBY

(beat, taking it as a rejection)

Yessir.

19 CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER

(beat)

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

SHELBY

(relieved)

Yessir.

DATA'S COM VOICE

Data to Riker. Message from Starfleet, Captain.

RIKER

Go ahead, Data.

DATA'S COM VOICE

Starfleet reports it has engaged the Borg at Wolf 359.

On Riker's reaction...

20
thru OMITTED
25

26 INT. ENTERPRISE MAIN BRIDGE

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

DATA

Admiral Hanson on subspace, Captain...

RIKER

On screen.

27 ANGLE (OPTICAL)

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

RIKER

Admiral...

27 CONTINUED:

HANSON

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

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

28 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

warping.

RIKER (V.O.)

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

29 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE

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

RIKER

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

DATA

Thank you, sir...

RIKER

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

(with some tongue-in-cheek)

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

29 CONTINUED:

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

RIKER

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

SHELBY

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

GEORDI

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

DATA

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

BEVERLY

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

SHELBY

Nanites?

DATA

Robots small enough to enter living cells.

RIKER

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

BEVERLY

That's the problem. Two, three weeks.

TROI

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

29 CONTINUED: (2)

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

WORF

We have the new phaser adapters...

GEORDI

(grim)

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

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

RIKER

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

30 ANGLE - THE FACES

around the table.

RIKER (O.C.)

(continuing)

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

31 RIKER

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

RIKER

(a beat)

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

(beat, bailing out)

Dismissed.

As they rise to leave...

32 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

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

33 ANGLE - THE DESK

with no one behind it...

34 RIKER

RIKER
What would you do?

A chime.

RIKER
Come in.

The door opens to reveal Guinan. She ENTERS.

GUINAN
May I speak to you, Captain?

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

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

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

GUINAN
I hope I'm not imposing.

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

RIKER
What's on your mind?

34 CONTINUED:

GUINAN

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

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

GUINAN

(continuing)

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

RIKER

(defensive)

I'm not sure anyone can.

GUINAN

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

(beat)

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

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

RIKER

(with an edge)

I'll do the best I can.

GUINAN

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

(off his look)

Let go of Picard.

RIKER

(calmly angry)

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

GUINAN

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

(MORE)

34 CONTINUED: (2)

GUINAN (Cont'd)

(beat)

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

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

GUINAN

Did he ever tell you why we were
so close?

RIKER

No.

GUINAN

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

(beat)

There can only be one Captain.

RIKER

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

GUINAN

And the Borg know everything he
knows...

RIKER

Yes...

GUINAN

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

(beat)

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

He reacts. She stands.

GUINAN

This chair is yours.

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

35 OMITTED

36 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

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

WESLEY

(on com)

Captain, we're approaching the Wolf system.

RIKER'S COM VOICE

On my way.

Riker ENTERS from the Ready Room.

RIKER

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

WORF

Sensors are picking up several vessels, Captain...

RIKER

The fleet?

DATA

(checking)

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

RIKER

Lifesigns?

DATA

Negative, sir.

WORF

Visual contact.

RIKER

On screen.

37 ANGLE - VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

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

38 TWO SHOT - RIKER AND SHELBY

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

SHELBY

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

On Riker's face...

39 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

40 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

at impulse, going through the devastation as before.

41 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

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

RIKER

Data, your analysis...

DATA

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

RIKER

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

WESLEY

Aye, Captain.

RIKER

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

SHELBY

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

RIKER

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

She reacts...

SHELBY

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

41 CONTINUED:

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

RIKER

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

42 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

at Warp.

43 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

43A ANGLE (OPTICAL)

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

44 LOCUTUS

reacts... over his face --

RIKER'S VOICE

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

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

from the Battle Bridge...

LOCUTUS

You may speak.

INTERCUT:

46 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

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

RIKER

We wish to end the hostilities.

LOCUTUS

Then you must unconditionally surrender.

RIKER

We are prepared to meet to discuss your terms.

LOCUTUS

(a beat)

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

RIKER

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

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

LOCUTUS

Picard implicitly trusted you.

RIKER

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

The Borg influence takes over in Locutus.

46 CONTINUED:

LOCUTUS

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

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

RIKER

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

GLEASON

(acknowledging)

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

RIKER

(to comm)

Mister O'Brien, report...

INTERCUT:

47 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

O'Brien with Data and Worf...

O'BRIEN

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

RIKER

(to comm)

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

DATA

Aye, Captain...

Data and Worf each don an armpack.

48 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

48 CONTINUED:

RIKER

We would like time to prepare our people for assimilation.

LOCUTUS

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

49 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

RIKER

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

LOCUTUS

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

RIKER

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

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

RIKER

Reset subspace communications to scrambler code Riker One...

GLEASON

Scrambler code Riker One, acknowledged.

RIKER

(to com)
Commander Shelby, report...

INTERCUT:

50 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Shelby at command with supernumeraries at other posts.

50 CONTINUED:

SHELBY
Ready for separation.

RIKER
Make it so.

51 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The separation begins...

51A INT. ENGINEERING

GEORDI
Docking latches clear, separation
complete...

52 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

WESLEY
Saucer velocity one hundred meters
per second and increasing.

RIKER
Open fire... all weapons...

53 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

SHELBY
Fire...

54 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

55 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

56 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

WESLEY

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

56 CONTINUED:

RIKER

Evasive manuevers... pattern Riker
Alpha...

WESLEY

Riker Alpha, confirmed...

57 EXT. SPACE - THE BATTLE SECTION (OPTICAL)

moving quickly by...

58 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

WESLEY

They're ignoring the saucer
section completely...

RIKER

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

WESLEY

Riker Beta, confirmed...

RIKER

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

59 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

SHELBY

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

60 EXT. SPACE - THE SAUCER SECTION (OPTICAL)

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

61 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

62 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

Pushing to Riker...

RIKER
Launch shuttle...

63 INT. SHUTTLE

Data and Worf inside...

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

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

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

65 INT. BORG SHIP - LOCUTUS

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

66 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

67 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

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

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

RIKER
(to com)
Data, cut your engines... take
her in unpowered...

67A EXT. SPACE - THE SHUTTLE (OPTICAL)

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

68 INT. SHUTTLE - OVER THE SHOULDER (OPTICAL)

The shuttle shakes.

69 OMITTED

70 INT. BORG SHIP - LOCUTUS

watches.

71 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

Favoring Riker...

WESLEY

They're gonna make it...

INTERCUT:

72 INT. SHUTTLE - OVER THE SHOULDER (OPTICAL)

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

WORF

Shuttle has penetrated the Borg electromagnetic field...

Data is already out of his seat...

DATA

(checking sensors)

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

RIKER'S COM VOICE

And back, Mister Data?

DATA

Yessir, there should be enough energy for two transports.

72 CONTINUED:

RIKER'S COM VOICE

Proceed.

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

73 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

74 LOCUTUS AND WORF (OPTICAL)

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

75 INT. SHUTTLE (OPTICAL)

They MATERIALIZE...

WORF

Mission accomplished... we have him...

Touching a control panel:

DATA

Firing shuttle thrusters...

76 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

RIKER

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

77 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

O'BRIEN

Locked in...

78 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

fires their cutting beam and obliterates the shuttle.

79 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

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

O'BRIEN
Transport successful, sir...

80 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

81 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

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

82 INT. BATTLE BRIDGE

As before.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE

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

GLEASON

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

RIKER

Stand-by, La Forge...

WESLEY

(to himself)

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

RIKER

Prepare to draw their fire...

WESLEY

(surprised)

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

83 ANGLE - THE VIEW SCREEN (OPTICAL)

As the Borg ship warps away.

83 CONTINUED:

WESLEY

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

RIKER

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

84 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

reconnects.

85 INT. SICKBAY

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

BEVERLY

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

RIKER

Can you revive him?

BEVERLY

(reluctant)

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

RIKER

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

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

85 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

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

His eye opens...

LOCUTUS

Beverly... Crusher...

BEVERLY

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

LOCUTUS

I am... on board the Enterprise.

RIKER

That's right.

LOCUTUS

A futile maneuver.

They react. He sits up.

RIKER

Locutus...

LOCUTUS

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

BEVERLY

(to comm)

Security...

LOCUTUS

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

Worf and two security men ENTER...

LOCUTUS

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

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

85 CONTINUED: (2)

LOCUTUS/PICARD

No harm.

Locutus continues.

85 CONTINUED: (2)

LOCUTUS

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

On reactions...

86 INT. MAIN BRIDGE - SCIENCE STATION

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

DATA

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

BEVERLY

That's how they're controlling him?

DATA

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

RIKER

Can't we block them?

DATA

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

RIKER

The injured Borg immediately self-destructed.

86 CONTINUED:

DATA

That is correct, sir.

BEVERLY

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

Riker frowns... thinks...

RIKER

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

BEVERLY

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

DATA

(beat, an idea)

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

Riker reacts and...

87 INT. SICKBAY

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

LOCUTUS

Worf.

Worf silently studies him, mixed feelings.

LOCUTUS

Klingon species. A warrior race.

(beat)

You too will be assimilated.

WORF

The Klingon Empire will never
yield.

87 CONTINUED:

LOCUTUS

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

WORF

I like my species the way it is.

LOCUTUS

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

Riker, Data and Beverly ENTER...

LOCUTUS

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

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

RIKER

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

SHELBY'S COM VOICE

Shelby to Riker...

RIKER

Go ahead...

SHELBY'S COM VOICE

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

On Riker's reaction...

88 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

89 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

still at warp.

90 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

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

SHELBY

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

RIKER

Planetary defenses?

SHELBY

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

RIKER

(interrupting)

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

WESLEY

Twenty-seven minutes...

RIKER

The soonest we can intercept?

WESLEY

(beat, grim)

Forty-two minutes, sir.

RIKER

(to com)

Riker to Data... your status?

INTERCUT:

91 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

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

DATA

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

RIKER

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

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

DATA

Proceeding immediately, sir. Data out.

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

92 ANGLE - THE BIOBED

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

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

DATA

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

O'BRIEN

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

DATA

I do not know. I have never done this before.

(touching a series of panels)

Initiating first neural link...

93 BEVERLY

at monitors with human lifesigns displayed...

BEVERLY

The Captain's vital signs are stable...

94 O'BRIEN

looking at an Okudagram...

O'BRIEN

Positronic activity unchanged...

95 RESUME - DATA

DATA

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

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

96 EXT. SPACE - THE BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

97 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF

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

WESLEY

Enterprise approaching the Terran system, sir...

RIKER

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

WESLEY

Twenty-three minutes, fourteen seconds, sir.

98 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

at impulse power moving by Saturn...

99 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

DATA

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

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

100 BEVERLY

reacts... checking her monitor...

BEVERLY

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

101 O'BRIEN

watching his sensors...

O'BRIEN

Sir, your submicron matrix
activity is increasing
exponentially.

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

DATA

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

TROI

Data...

DATA

Stand by... processing...

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

DATA

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

Suddenly...

102 THE BORG ARM

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

103 THE SECURITY MAN

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

104 DATA

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

105 THE TWO ARMS

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

105A THE BROKEN BORG 'HAND'

continues to move in Data's hand...

106 RESUME SCENE

BEVERLY

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

O'BRIEN

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

DATA

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

TROI

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

Slowly...

107 PICARD'S HUMAN ARM

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

108 REACTIONS

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

109 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

TROI'S COM VOICE

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

RIKER

Can you communicate with him, Data?

DATA'S COM VOICE

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

WORF

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

SHELBY

I think we got their attention...

RIKER

Time to intercept... ?

WESLEY

Two minutes, four seconds...

RIKER

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

INTERCUT:

110 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

DATA

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

BEVERLY

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

RIKER

What do you mean, Doctor?

BEVERLY

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

SHELBY

(extrapolating)

They operate as a single mind...

RIKER

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

(to com)

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

DATA

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

RIKER

(interrupting)

Make every effort, Mister Data...

DATA

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

RIKER

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

110 CONTINUED:

WORF

Visual contact with the Borg...

SHELBY

On screen.

111 ANGLE - THE VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

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

RIKER

Magnify.

The image is magnified...

WORF

Sensors reading increased power generation from the Borg...

RIKER

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

WORF

Aye, Captain...

RIKER

Status of the Borg weapons...

WORF

Borg weapon systems are fully charged...

RIKER

Data... ?

INTERCUT:

112 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

DATA

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

112 CONTINUED:

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

113 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

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

114 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The ship shakes...

WORF

Borg attempting to lock on tractor beam...

RIKER

Rotate shield frequencies...

(to com)

Data, report...

INTERCUT:

115 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

Shaking continuing...

DATA

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

SHELBY

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

DATA

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

116 ANGLE - PICARD

shaking with the ship... stirring...

INT. ENGINEERING - GEORDI

at a console...

GEORDI
Shields have failed...

INT. MAIN BRIDGE

RIKER
Fire all weapons.

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

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

INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

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

INTERCUT:

INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Close on Riker as the truth sets in...

SHELBY
Then it's over.

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

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

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

WESLEY
Yessir.

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

122 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

Picard groans, whispers...

PICARD

Sleep.

122 CONTINUED:

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

BEVERLY
Data, he's regaining
consciousness...

PICARD
Sleep.

TROI
(reacts)
It is Captain Picard speaking,
not Locutus.

PICARD
Sleep. Data.

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

BEVERLY
He's exhausted.

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

123 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

WORF
Borg cutting beam activated...

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

RIKER
Mister Crusher, en...

DATA'S COM VOICE
Data to Bridge... stand by...

RIKER
Stand by all stations...

123 CONTINUED:

DATA'S COM VOICE

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

124 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

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

125 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

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

COMPUTER VOICE

Warning. Outer hull breach.

WORF

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

RIKER

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

DATA'S COM VOICE

Stand by...

RIKER

I can't, Mister Data...

COMPUTER VOICE

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

126 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Suddenly, the attack simply ends.

127 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Reactions.

127 CONTINUED:

RIKER
Data? What the hell happened?

INTERCUT:

128 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

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

129 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Reactions.

RIKER
To... sleep.

DATA
Yessir.

RIKER
Status of Borg power drive... ?

WORF
Minimal power...

RIKER
Electromagnetic field?

WORF
Nonexistent.

RIKER
(reacts)
Commander Shelby, take an away
team and confirm that the Borg...
are... asleep.

SHELBY
Delighted, sir.

As she EXITS...

130 INT. BORG SHIP (OPTICAL)

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

SHELBY

(keys insignia)

Shelby to Enterprise. It's true.
They're all in their regeneration mode.

INTERCUT:

131 INT. ENTERPRISE CORRIDOR

Riker on the move...

RIKER

(keying insignia)

Any indication to how long we can keep them like this...

132 INT. BORG SHIP

SHELBY

Checking...

WORF

(to Shelby)

Commander, tricorder readings are fluctuating rapidly...

Shelby comes over... reacts...

SHELBY

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

133 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

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

133 CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

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

DATA

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

RIKER

(beat)

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

Data follows the order as --

RIKER

(keys insignia)

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

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

134 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

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

INTERCUTTING:

135 INT. DATA'S LABORATORY

Picard shudders...

135A THE BORG SHIP

blows apart.

135B PICARD

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

135B CONTINUED:

BEVERLY

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

TROI

How do you feel?

With a voice hoarse from fatigue...

PICARD

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

BEVERLY

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

RIKER

(to Picard)
How much do you remember?

PICARD

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

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

136 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Orbiting Earth.

137 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

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

137 CONTINUED:

RIKER

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

PICARD

Have they estimated the time for repairs... ?

RIKER

Five to six weeks...

A chime.

PICARD & RIKER

Come.

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

SHELBY

Request permission to disembark, sir...

Riker defers to Picard, thereby clearly relinquishing command.

PICARD

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

SHELBY

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

(to Riker)

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

Riker grins, exuding confidence...

RIKER

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

(with a nod in

Picard's direction)

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

(beat)

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

137 CONTINUED: (2)

SHELBY

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

(turning to Picard)
Captain...

Picard nods, dismissing her. And she EXITS.

RIKER

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

PICARD

Make it so, Number One.

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

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END

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