"The Ensigns of Command"

#40273-149

Written by
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STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Ensigns of Command"

CAST

PICARD
RIKER
DATA
BEVERLY
TROI
GEORDI
WORF
WESLEY
O'BRIEN

Non-Speaking
WOMAN VIOLINIST
WOMAN VIOLIST
N.D. CREWMEMBERS (10)
SUPERNUMERARIES (CONN & OPS)

HRATHAN
ARD'RIAN
GOSHEVEN
HARITATH
NOE
Non-Speaking
COUNCILMEN (2)
OTHER LOCALS (15)
HARITATH'S WIFE

YOUNG BOY (age 12)
BOY'S MOTHER
STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Ensigns of Command"

SETS

INTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE
MAIN BRIDGE
TEN FORWARD
OBSERVATION LOUNGE
TRANSPORTER ROOM
CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM

CYGNA TAU CETI
ARD'RIAN'S FRONT ROOM

HRATHAN WARSHIP

DATA'S SHUTTLE

EXTERIORS

USS ENTERPRISE

CYGNA TAU CETI
FRONTIER TOWN
MAINSTREET
TOWN SQUARE
AQUEDUCT
WATER PLANT
DATA'S SHUTTLE

HRATHAN WARSHIP
STAR TREK: "Ensigns of Command" - REV. 7/3/89 - TEASER

STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION
"The Ensigns of Command"

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

Moving at warp speed.

2 INT. TEN-FORWARD

Present are PICARD, BEVERLY, and TEN N.D. CREWMEMBERS. TWO WOMEN are seated, holding their instruments -- a violin and a viola. O'BRIEN tunes his cello. DATA ENTERS carrying a violin. He checks at the door, startled to see the Captain. Picard beckons, and Data crosses to him.

DATA
Captain, Doctor, I am honored by your presence, but may I suggest you attend the second concert.

BEVERLY
Why, Data?

DATA
Ensign Ortiz will perform the violin part. My rendition will be less enjoyable.

PICARD
Oh?

DATA
While I am quite proficient technically; according to my fellow performers, I lack soul.

BEVERLY
Data, telling us why you're going to fail before you make the attempt is never wise.

DATA
But is not honesty always the preferred choice?

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
Not necessarily. And in a
commander it can cripple you.

DATA
(very intrigued)
Indeed?

PICARD
Knowing your limitations is one
thing. Admitting them to a crew
can damage your ability to lead.

DATA
Because you lose their respect?

PICARD
By admitting them you begin to
believe in those limitations
yourself.

DATA
Thank you for your honesty,
Captain. But I am still puzzled,
how do music and command
correspond?

BEVERLY
(amused and impatient)
Later, Data. Go and play.

Data takes his place with the other performers. Begins
to tune his instrument. There is the SOUND of the
communicator hail.

RIKER'S COM VOICE
Captain Picard to the bridge.
We're receiving a message from
the Hrathan Corporate.

Picard reacts with surprise, stands and EXITS. As
he leaves we hear but do not see the trio begin to
play.

CUT TO:

INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard ENTERS. RIKER, TROI, and WORF at their usual
stations. Supernumeraries at CONN and OPS.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RIKER

Eighty-two years of silence and
they still don’t want to talk to
us. It’s a pre-recorded message.

PICARD

(to Worf)

There’s no mistake?

WORF

The origin point is Hratha.

PICARD

On screen.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

What appears is the text of a treaty. English on one
side, Hrathan on the other. Hrathan is not symbols as
we know them, but rather a pattern of lights. A
recorded message begins.

HRATHAN

Federation creatures, there are
humans on the fifth planet of
Cygna Tau Ceti. This planet was
ceded to the Corporate in section
one hundred and thirty-three,
paragraph seventy-seven of the
Treaty of Armens. We will begin
settlement of this world in four
days. Remove the humans.

Troi is up, and heading for Science One to pull the
treaty.

PICARD

What the devil --

HRATHAN

Federation creatures, there are
humans on the fifth planet --

PICARD

Cancel message.

Inquiring look to Riker.

RIKER

I didn’t think humans could
survive on Hrathan worlds.

(CONTINUED)
TROI
They can't. Hyperonic radiation is essential to support Hrathan life.

PICARD
And deadly to human life.

RIKER
Then we're chasing ghosts.

PICARD
No, Number One. The Hrathan haven't broken their long silence to send us after phantoms. An investigation is in order. Set course for Cygna Tau Ceti.

Off Picard's expression:

FADE OUT.

END OF THE TEASER
FADE IN:

5 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL) entering orbit around a planet.

6 INT. MAIN BRIDGE

Picard, Riker, Data, Beverly and Worf. Supernumerary at CONN.

DATA
Human life form readings from the planet.

RIKER
So, the Hrathan weren’t hallucinating.

PICARD
Numbers?

WORF
Difficult to get an accurate reading, Captain. The high levels of hyperonic radiation are affecting our sensors.

GEORDI'S COM VOICE
Transporters are now unavailable, Captain. We can transport, but we won’t like what comes back.

PICARD
Understood, Mr. La Forge.

RIKER
How can humans survive here?

BEVERLY
Milan’s work in radiation sensitivity suggests that some humans can adapt to hyperonic radiation over a period of years. The process can be accelerated in the lab. Give me two weeks and after complete blood replacement and virotherapy injections I can have an Away Team ready to beam down.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
Unfortunately we have only three
days. And I need facts now.
Who's down there, how many are
there?

RIKER
And will they leave?

PICARD
They have to. This is a treaty
violation. The Hrathan are within
their rights to demand removal.

RIKER
(to Worf and Data)
Environment suits, gentlemen.
And with these radiation levels
it's going to take some pretty
piloting to get that shuttle down
safely.

DATA
May I offer an alternative?

PICARD
Yes, Mister Data?

DATA
I am unaffected by the radiation,
and my skills as a shuttle pilot
are superior to any other officer
aboard the Enterprise.

RIKER
(a little miffed)
Oh?

DATA
Have I given offense?

(continues...
CONTINUED: (2)

RIKER
(teasing now)
Close.

PICARD
The point, Mister Data?

DATA
This is mere reconnaissance.
Perhaps I should go alone?

PICARD
Agreed. You will handle the away mission.

Without a word wasted the Android is out of his chair, and EXITS the Bridge.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - CYGNA V

Mainstreet of a 24th century frontier town. Because of its distance from the sun an eternal twilight grips Cygna Five. The sun is a tiny jewel which hangs purple and brilliant on the horizon. Streetlights throw light across the dirt road. In the distance are mountains. A thin white line descends from the mountains, and as it comes closer we realize it is an aqueduct. It culminates in a strange cubic shaped purifying station. A complex pump is churning the water into a white froth.

A FEW PEOPLE stroll the street. A tiny, lovely woman, ARD'RIAN is struggling to muscle a large 24th century plow into the farm equipment store. One of the blades is broken. She is dressed in the twenty-fourth century equivalent of blue jeans, work shirt, boots. Her hair is pulled back in a no-nonsense pony tail, and a battered hat is crammed onto her head.

Data comes around the corner. He is busy absorbing everything. Glancing from tricorder to the buildings, the people, etc. The locals freeze and stare at him.

(CONTINUED)
Ard'rian continues to mutter under her breath, and fight with the unwieldy plow. Data notices, crosses to her, and easily hefts the equipment. She stares up at him in surprise.

DATA
Where do you wish this placed?

ARD'RIAN
Just inside the door.

Data does so.

ARD'RIAN
Thanks that was very nice of you. It seems like I spend my life repairing things. (she extends a hand) Ard'rian McKenzie.

They shake.

DATA
I am Lieutenant Commander Data.

Ardy studies him.

ARD'RIAN
(frankly)
I've never seen anybody who looks like you.

DATA
That is because I am an android.

ARD'RIAN
Amazing. Are there any more like you at home?

DATA
No, I am unique.

GOSHEVEN
(amused)
So, where are you from, Mister Unique?

GOSHEVEN slips an arm around Ardy's waist and gives her a proprietary kiss. She shrugs him off, and pulls out of the circle of his arm. He is an imposing, handsome man who towers over the slender Android. He is flanked by TWO MEN.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:  (2)

All three of them carry weighted short staffs, similar to a billy club -- symbols of their office as councilmen.

DATA
The Federation Starship Enterprise currently in orbit around your world.

GOSHEVEN
Well, I'll be damned. You finally found us.

DATA
Excuse me?

GOSHEVEN
We're the descendants of the colony aboard the Artemis. We were forced to make an emergency landing eighty years ago.

All right! A way out of the problem!

DATA
Then you would welcome a rescue?

GOSHEVEN
Hell no. This planet damn near killed our grandparents, but it's home now.

Dashed hopes.

DATA
Could you direct me to your local equivalent of mayor, president, prime minister --

GOSHEVEN
You found him.

DATA
Excellent. How many individuals currently live on Cygna Five?

GOSHEVEN
Why?

DATA
So I may inform my captain.
CONTINUED: (3)

GOSHEVEN
For the census, something like that?

(CONTINUED)
DATA (cautiously)
Not precisely.

GOSHEVEN
(suddenly suspicious)
I don't think I want your captain
to know.

DATA
Why would you not?

GOSHEVEN
You ignored us for eighty years.
You can just go right on ignoring
us.

DATA
It is imperative that I determine
the number of inhabitants --

Gosheven taps the tricorder.

GOSHEVEN
Can't your little box tell you?

DATA
Its range is limited.

GOSHEVEN
Then I guess you're out of luck,
(a beat)
So, you can be on your way.

ARD'RIAN
Gosheven! I don't think it's
necessary to be rude.

Gosheven and the two councilmen walk away. Ardy is
feeling sorry for Data.

ARD'RIAN
(continuing)
I can tell you everything you
need to know.

CUT TO:
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8 INT. ENTERPRISE - MAIN BRIDGE

Picard, Troi, Worf and WESLEY in their usual places. Riker at Science One. Supernumerary at Ops.

RIKER
Got it. The Artemis, launch point Mars, destination Septimis Minor. When they failed to check in StarFleet began an extensive search.

DATA'S COM VOICE
They are rather resentful of StarFleet's failure to locate them.

PICARD
What carried them so far off course?

9 EXT. PLANET SURFACE - CYGNA V - TWILIGHT

Data sits on the steps of the shuttle. Light spills from the door. Tumbled boulders, patchy bushes, and sand surround the shuttle.

DATA
My local informant does not know. In the early days survival on Cygna V was more important than history.

10 INTERCUTS

PICARD
Understood. How many are there?

DATA
Approximately fifteen thousand.

Reactions from the bridge crew. Now they really have got a problem.

RIKER
(to Picard)
We've only got three days. Even with transporters we couldn't have them out in time.

PICARD
Shuttles?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Worf does some figuring on his console.

WORF
Estimated time for evacuation --
four weeks, four days.

Wesley in a soft aside to the crewmember at Ops.

WESLEY
And where would we put them all?

DATA
Captain, I do not think these
people will leave.

PICARD
One problem at a time. Hold your
position, Mister Data.

Picard closes the com line.

PICARD
(continuing)
Mister Worf, get me the Hrathan.

WORF
Their home world is quite
distant, Captain. This will take
some time.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - CYGNA V - NIGHT

Data hears a SOUND, and rises searching for the source
of the noise. Ard’rian, carrying a covered basket,
steps out of the shadows.

ARD’RIAN
Do androids eat dinner?

DATA
I do not require the ingestion
of food to maintain function.

Ardy reacts.

(CONTINUED)
ARD'RIAN
(startled)
All right. Well, can I offer you a bed? That'll be more comfortable than this.

DATA
I do not require sleep.

Ardy is a little miffed at having her hospitality so callously rejected.

(CONTINUED)
ARD’RIAN
So you don't eat and you don't
sleep. Must save a lot of time.

DATA
I realize there are subtleties
of experience for humans beyond
the obvious necessity for food
and rest, but the concepts still
elude me.

She reads sadness into this speech, and instantly her
attitude softens.

ARD’RIAN
How about company?

DATA
(accessing)
Ah, the friendly exchange of
experiences and information. That
is a concept I understand.

ARD’RIAN
Then please be a guest in my home.

Data takes the basket from her, and they walk away
together.

CUT TO:

INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE

Picard, Riker and Troi are seated as GEORDI, O’Brien
ENTER.

RIKER
Gentlemen, in the Captain's
estimation and mine, you are the
finest engineers in Starfleet.

GEORDI
Thank you, sir.

Wary glance to O’Brien. Both of them cast wary glances
at the impassive Picard. Now what the hell is he going
to want?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RIKER
We’re giving you an assignment,
and the one thing I don’t want
to hear is that it is impossible.

PICARD
I need the transporters to
function despite the hyperonic
radiation.

GEORDI
Imposs -- Yes, sir.

Geordi and O’Brien EXIT. Riker, Troi and Picard study
each other seriously.

RIKER
I know they have the right, but
will the Hrathan demand the
removal of the colony?

PICARD
Probably, but I’m going to
attempt to forestall that.

RIKER
How?

PICARD
By parleying with them.

TROI
Captain, when the treaty was
negotiated the Federation sent
three hundred and seventy-two
legal experts. What have we got?

PICARD
Thee . . . and me.

Off Troi’s very dubious expression as we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
FADE IN:

13 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

in orbit around Cygna V.

14 INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Picard pacing nervously. Troi seated, serene but tense, as they wait for the call. Worf at his station. Supernumeraries at Conn and Ops.

WORF
No response.

PICARD
Try again. Boost signal strength.

Worf makes adjustments.

WORF
Hrathan Corporate. This is the Starship Enterprise. Respond please.

15 ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN - (OPTICAL)

as it changes from a view of stars to ? someplace? Wherever the HRATHAN are calling from it is a disturbing place for humans. Darkness, mirrored surfaces, and hidden in the shadows a creature who is decidedly unsettling for the crew. Its shape is constantly shifting like oozing sludge, and there is a hint of flickering eyes -- too many eyes.

HRATHAN
Conversation is neither required nor desired.

Picard is furious, but he schools his features into an expression of polite interest.

PICARD
Very necessary if we are to find a solution to our mutual problem.

(CONTINUED)
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15 CONTINUED:

HRATHAN
Involvement in Federation
illegality is not indicated.

PICARD
Both parties are involved, sir.
There is a colony on a Hrathan
world. We need to work together
to solve the problem.

HRATHAN
You admit fault?

PICARD
No! And assigning blame is
pointless. The colony exists.
Let us seek a solution.

HRATHAN
Remove them. Three Earth days
remain.

Troi leans in, and whispers:

TROI
Their culture is extremely formal,
almost ritualistic. An apology
might smooth matters.

PICARD
I apologize for our inadvertent
violation of the treaty.

HRATHAN
Acknowledged and accepted. Remove
them.

PICARD
You are not negotiating! You are
issuing ultimatums!

HRATHAN
To what purpose negotiation? The
treaty is signed.

PICARD
There is a thriving colony on the
planet. Rather than uproot these
people may I suggest a compromise?
The Federation will offer a
similar world in trade.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

HRATHAN
Unacceptable.

PICARD
Why?!

HRATHAN
The law is paramount. We are entitled.

PICARD
This is not a law. It is a treaty. It is designed to smooth relations between peoples. Not to act as a strait...

But Picard’s talking to a blank screen. The Hrathan have hung up on him.

PICARD
... jacket.

Off Picard’s outraged expression.

CUT TO:

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM (OPTICAL)

Geordi, O’Brien and Wesley have the panels removed from the wall behind the transporter console. Geordi’s tool box is nearby. Sophisticated tools litter the floor. Off to the left side of the transporter are six test objects. They look a lot like crash dummies. The trio is watching tensely as O’Brien touches the console. A test dummy MATERIALIZES looking like swiss cheese. Geordi picks it up. Riker ENTERS.

RIKER
Gentlemen, how are you coming?  
(spots the dummy)  
What the hell is that?

Geordi sets aside the mutilated dummy.

GEORDI
Our first attempt.

O’BRIEN
We recalibrated the transporter setting for the tightest possible beam.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

WESLEY
But we've got plenty of things left to try.

Geordi is studying the test object again.

GEORDI
There's some really interesting residue . . . reminds me of --
(a beat)
There's that damn pulsar in the neighborhood.

WESLEY
Higgs-bosons.

O'BRIEN
This just got a lot harder.

WESLEY
They're one of the most massive sub-atomic particles known, and they really shred a transporter signal.

RIKER
Thank you, Ensign, I passed physics.
(to Geordi)
Keep at it. We need those transporters.

Riker EXITS.

GEORDI
Back to the oars, men. This is going to be a fun one to crack.

CUT TO:

INT. ARD'RIAN'S FRONT ROOM - DAY

A comfortable room constructed of stone with a heavy beamed ceiling. A fireplace dominates one wall. There are two doors at opposite ends of the room leading to the kitchen and the bedrooms. The furniture is hand hewn, durable but comfortable.
18 ANGLE ON DATA

as he wipes his dirty hands on a cloth. A small
generator sits on the coffee table, a few tools are
strewn about. O.S. is the sound of energetic if
tuneless whistling.

19 ANGLE ON KITCHEN DOOR

Ard’rian ENTERS. She is dressed in her usual jeans
and boots, but her hair is down, floating softly on
her shoulders.

DATA
I have completed the repairs on
the generator.

ARD’RIAN
Is there anything you can’t do?

DATA
Whistle, dance, sneeze.
(a beat)
A great many things.

ARD’RIAN
I can’t help with the whistling,
Dancing is overrated, and
sneezing you can do without. I
can’t see that you’re missing
a thing.

Data has been studying Ardy, and he likes her. He
doesn’t want any misunderstandings. In typical
straightforward Data fashion he says what’s on his
mind.

DATA
Are you developing a "crush" on
me?

ARD’RIAN
What!

DATA
A crush, an infatuation, puppy
love, a fascination or beguilement
--

ARD’RIAN
You don’t have to define it!
(aggressively)
What makes you think that?

(CONTINUED)
DATA
I am not unobservant, and there are cues. Your invitation. Your hair.

Her hands fly to her hair, and she yanks it back into its tight pony tail, and secures it with a clip from the mantle. She is angry, confused and embarrassed because Data's blunt question has brought to light feelings of which even she was unaware.

ARD’RIAN
Men! You think every damn thing we do is for you! No, I do not have a crush on you.

DATA
I have angered you. If I was in error I apologize.

ARD’RIAN
Fine.

She busies herself with some little clean-up task in another part of the room. There is tension in every line of her body. Suddenly she turns back to Data.

ARD’RIAN
(continuing)
If I were... if I did have... feelings for you; would that bother you?

DATA
I have no opinion one way or the other.

ARD’RIAN
So you really don't like me.

DATA
I did not say that.

ARD’RIAN
What are you saying?

DATA
Perhaps my use of the word crush was not specific enough. I am inquiring if you find me attractive? Emotionally, intellectually, sexually?

(CONTINUED)
19 CONTINUED: (2)

Ardy is gaping like a carp over this. She chuckles.

ARD’RIAN
You’re nothing if not honest.

DATA
Yes.

ARD’RIAN
Data, people don’t say things like that.

DATA
Why not?

ARD’RIAN
Because . . .
   (a beat)
Well, damned if I know.

DATA
It helps to avoid misunderstandings.

Ardy crosses to him. Her hands are thrust into her pockets as if to keep from touching him. She looks up at him.

ARD’RIAN
So you like people to say what’s on their minds?

DATA
Yes.

They are standing very close. Ardy is staring up at Data, and we see her realize that yes she is developing a crush on him. Suddenly Data’s communicator trills. He touches the insignia.

DATA
Data, here.

PICARD’S COM VOICE
The Hrathan won’t bargain.

DATA
Understood.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD'S COM VOICE
I'm contacting Starfleet to arrange for transport. Get those people prepared for evacuation. We may have to move very quickly.

DATA
Yes, sir.

Data cuts the communication.

ARD'RIAN
Evacuation? What's going on?

DATA
I must speak with Gosheven and the counselors. Do you wish to accompany me?

ARD'RIAN
Don't be an idiot. Of course I'm coming.

Ard'rian grabs a coat, and they EXIT.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)
In orbit around Cygna V.

INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM
Picard is pacing furiously about the office. Troi is seated on the couch watching him. Her expression is grim. Riker ENTERS.

RIKER
Yes, sir?

PICARD
Three weeks. Starfleet is profuse in their apologies, but it will still be three weeks.

RIKER
For?

(CONtinued)
PICARD
A colony transport ship equipped with dedicated personnel shuttles to arrive.

RIKER
We’re down to two days.

PICARD
Oh, and they’re quite certain I will handle the situation with my usual skill.

RIKER
Nice of them.

Picard sits in silence for a beat.

RIKER
(continuing)
So what are we going to do?

PICARD
Extend Data’s deadline by three weeks. Lay in a course for Hratha.

TROI
Sir, no Federation ship has ever approached the Hrathan home world.

PICARD
We have to take the risk.

Off Picard’s determined expression as we:

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - MAIN STREET

Data blinks and reacts as water hits him in the face. Pull back to reveal Goshaven who has just flipped a handful of water from the aqueduct pool into the Android’s face.

The man and the machine are surrounded by the two members of the city council and Ard’rian. A few other interested on-lookers hang about in the background.

(CONTINUED)
GOSHEVEN
Feel that? Do you have any idea
what it is? What it means?

DATA
It is water, a substance composed
of two atoms of hydrogen --

(CONTINUED)
GOSHEVEN
My grandfather's buried on that mountain.
(points to the distant line of hills)
He died in a rock slide surveying the route for this aqueduct. This town exists because of his sacrifice, and the sacrifice of hundreds of other people. No, we're not leaving.

Gosheven whirs and heads for the door to the government building. Data follows.

DATA
The Hrathan are within their rights. You are on this planet illegally.

GOSHEVEN
Whose side are you on, anyway? We crashed here. It wasn't our fault, but we're here now, and we're staying.

Data turns back to appeal to the counselors.

DATA
Surely you have no desire to rob a sentient race of their property?

GOSHEVEN
(spinning on him)
Now you're calling us thieves.

DATA
Inadvertent ones, yes. This world belongs to the Hrathan.

GOSHEVEN
They aren't here. They weren't here eighty years ago.

DATA
They are on their way.

GOSHEVEN
Let 'em come.

(CONTINUED)
DATA
I am certain the Federation will offer you a new world.

GOSHEVEN
That’s pretty damn ironic. For eighty years we don’t hear a peep out of the Federation. Thousands of us die acclimating to the radiation, but we survive, and we make a home. And now you turn up trying to throw us off our land.

DATA
I must urge you to begin preparing for evacuation.

GOSHEVEN
No.

DATA
Let us consider the points in favor of relocation.

Gosheven starts back toward city hall.

DATA
(continuing)
The Hrathan are unwilling to dwell with humanoid life forms.

The councilors also walk away.

DATA
(continuing)
Their reaction may be... extremely....

Data’s voice trails away. He is talking only to Ard’rian. She steps up to him, and dries his face with a handkerchief.

ARD’RIAN
Don’t you see. You’re asking us to give up everything.

DATA
My concern is that the Hrathan will not ask.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (4)

Off her suddenly concerned expression, we:

* FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
ACT THREE

FADE IN:

23 INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE
Riker pacing slowly, looking out at the stars.

RIKER
The Captain is taking the
Enterprise to Hratha. Your job
... well, you know your job.

CUT TO:

24 EXT. PLANET SURFACE - CYGNA V - DAY
Data is also pacing beside the shuttle.

DATA
Commander, in human parlance,
I do not believe I can "get the
job done." My training has
prepared me for starship command
duties. As a cultural contact
person I am proving to be less
than exemplary.

25 INTERCUTS

RIKER
Data, I don’t have time for
this.

DATA
I believe I should return to the
ship. I have tried everything,
and the leadership has rejected
my counsel.

RIKER
Then go back to them, and try
something else.

DATA
I do not know what to try. They
completely deny the logic of my
arguments. They confuse me with
talk of structures they have
built, and I do not understand
how this is relevant.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RIKER
There's something visceral about land.

DATA
There are an estimated three point seven million habitable worlds in the nineteen percent of the galaxy we have explored. Could they not become viscerally attached to another plot of ground?

Ard'rian walks up to join the Android. He gives her a distracted nod, and she sits on the steps of the shuttle.

RIKER
It's not that simple.

Riker catches himself, irritated he's been drawn into this discussion.

RIKER
(continuing)
Look, Data, dammit, you've got this fancy positronic brain, and years of Starfleet education. Use the one, and prove to me the other hasn't been time wasted.

DATA
If I do not succeed, how violent is the Hrathan reaction likely to be?

RIKER
The treaty is the only thing which kept them from eradicating the colony to begin with.

DATA
Oh.

RIKER
Yeah, "oh" is right. The lives of fifteen thousand people are riding on you. You better get creative. Riker out.

(CONTINUED)
Data's face is a study in confusion. Ard'rian stands, and gives his shoulders a squeeze.

ARD'RIAN
Would these Hrathan really use force?

(CONTINUED)
DATA
Yes, and your people will lose.

ARD’RIAN
Some things are worth dying for.

DATA
This is not one of them.

ARD’RIAN
How do you know? How can you presume to tell us what this place means to us?

DATA
I am not denying your emotional attachment. I am merely questioning your reckless pursuit of death.*

ARD’RIAN
You don’t want to see me fight?

DATA
I do not wish to see any of you die.*

Ard’rian moves away. Stares down at the ground, and scuffs thoughtfully with a booted toe.

ARD’RIAN
I’m so confused; I don’t know what to do.

DATA
Prepare to leave.

ARD’RIAN
Is that an order?

DATA
I lack the authority to issue an order in this circumstance, but consider it a strongly worded request.

ARD’RIAN
This is such a hard decision. I don’t know... I’ll think about it, okay?*
DATA
That is fair. I only hope the rest of your people will "think about it."

ARD’RIAN
You're a Starfleet officer; you have a better chance of convincing them than anyone.

DATA
I wonder.

ARD’RIAN
What?

This is not whining, this is Data calmly assessing the facts.

DATA
I have hypothesized that my commission is an elaborate experiment on Starfleet's part. But do they really plan to have me command a vessel?

ARD’RIAN
Why wouldn’t they?

DATA
Would you take orders from a machine?

A beat then Ard’rian suddenly gives Data a quick kiss on the lips.

DATA
(continuing)
Why did you do that?

ARD’RIAN
You looked like you needed it.

DATA
Ah, a human custom sealing friendship or indicating support, attraction, affection.

(CONTINUED)
ARD’RIAN
(saddened)
But it didn’t mean anything to you, did it? You didn’t feel anything.

DATA
I understand the motivation behind the action, and I thank you.

Ardy is confused, disappointed, sorry for Data, unable to ever understand the grand passion, but damn it she’s still attracted.

ARD’RIAN
You’re welcome... I guess.

CUT TO:

26 EXT. SPACE – THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)
Travelling at warp speed.

27 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM

As before, except there are more high tech tools and equipment lying about. Geordi is lifting yet another trashed test object off the platform. He holds it mutely out to Wesley and O’Brien who stare dully at this latest failure. There are now three intact objects, and four blasted ones. Picard ENTERS.

PICARD
(you will get it done)
How are we progressing, Mister La Forge?

GEORDI
(it’s impossible)
About like you’d expect.

PICARD
(get it done)
Splendid.

Picard EXITS.

WESLEY
(wearily)
He wants the impossible.

(continued)
GEORDI
(with a grin)
That's the short definition for "captain."

Geordi and O'Brien have already returned to work. Wes looks at them bemused, then shrugs and pitches in.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - CYGNA V

A large horseshoe shaped amphitheater with a place for the councilors and Gosheven. A number of citizens have turned out for the debate so the benches are filled. In the B.G. is the aqueduct purifying plant. Data and Ard'rian ENTER. There is some shifting and murmuring. Gosheven strides over to square off with Data.

GOSHEVEN
I thought you'd left.

DATA
I wish to speak at this meeting.

GOSHEVEN
No. And where have you been hiding?

DATA
I have been staying with Miss McKenzie.

GOSHEVEN
Why?!

ARD'RIAN
(resenting the tone)
I invited him.

GOSHEVEN
(to Ardy)
Well, you shouldn't have. (to Data)
And I'm warning you, stay away from her.

DATA
Your interest does not translate into ownership.

(Continued)
GOSHEVEN
So you want her?

DATA
No.

GOSHEVEN
(outraged)
Not good enough for you, Mister
Starfleet officer, Commander, sir?

ARD’RIAN
(angry and embarrassed)
Oh, Gosheven, shut up!

DATA
I did not say that. And I believe
we have exhausted the
possibilities for this topic of
conversation.

Data turns his back on Gosheven and says loudly:

DATA
(continuing)
I wish to address the assemblage.

GOSHEVEN
(furious)
And I said no.

DATA
Do you consider your position so
weak that it cannot withstand
debate?

A man, HARITATH, calls out.

HARITATH
Let him talk.

Gosheven gives a terse nod. In a sense Data’s called
him a coward and he has to stand up to this city
slicker, this outsider.

Data steps front and center. The Android is no fool
and he knows he’s no charismatic public speaker. In an
effort to pull this off, to seem more commanding and
persuasive he tries to imitate Picard and Riker at
their commanding best. And it comes off as expected --
awkward and a little uncomfortable.

(CONTINUED)
DATA
You know why I have come. You know of the Hrathan threat, and of Starfleet's desire to evacuate you for your own protection. You know of your leaders' response -- no, here we stand. That is your right. We cannot force you to leave. And during the past day I have come to understand and admire your position. As a Starfleet officer I have sworn an oath to serve. To that end I will give you any help I can.

Ard'rian is staring at him, confused and bewildered.

DATA
(continuing)
It is urgent that you prepare for the Hrathan arrival. Arms and ammunition must be gathered, a plan for your defense prepared. Our effort will be valiant, but doomed. We will die, but we will die for land and honor.

ANGLE ON
The crowd. Data's starting to get a reaction. People are beginning to eye each other nervously. It's one thing to thumb your nose at a distant enemy, quite another to talk about guns and dying.

ANGLE ON DATA
As he reaches down, and takes a YOUNG BOY (twelve or so) by the arm, and pulls the child up next to him.

DATA
Your children will understand that they are dying for a worthy cause. And the sight of their burned and blackened bodies...

Big crowd reaction here. Murmurs from various people. Mothers pull their children closer to them.

(CONTINUED)
DATA
(continuing)
...will only serve to make us fight harder. We will not regret the sacrifice, and our courage will be remembered and extolled for... oh, possibly two or three years.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

Ard’rian catches his game, and tries to support him.

ARD’RIAN
(continuing)
And that’s something I’m ready to die for -- a mention in the history books.

ANGLE ON GOSHEVEN

as he begins to applaud slowly.

GOSHEVEN
A valiant try, Commander, but what a low opinion you must have of us.

The boy’s MOTHER snatches her son back from Data, and pulls him down in her lap.

DATA
No, I was attempting to describe your inevitable destruction.

HARITATH
(standing)
And he describes it pretty damn well.

Murmurs of agreement from the crowd.

GOSHEVEN
You ready to follow this stranger out the door, Haritath? Give up everything? Without a fight? He says we’re going to lose, I think that’s his own cowardice talking!

A man, NOE, leaps to his feet.

NOE
Yeah, and what if he’s right, and you’re wrong?!

More crowd reaction. Sympathy is swinging away from Gosheven.

HARITATH
I don’t want to find out the hard way that the price was too high.

(CONTINUED)
GOSHEVEN
Last winter we buried your little

girl -- laid her to rest next
to your mother, and you whine
to me about price?

Gosheven whirs and nails Noe with a look.

(CONTINUED)
31 CONTINUED: (2)

GOSHEVEN
(continuing)
And you, Noe, we built you a new
house after the fire wiped you
out. You gonna walk away from
that?

NOE
I'd be happy just to know I'm
still gonna be walking after these
Hrathan show up.

GOSHEVEN
(addressing them all)
This town exists because we all
gave our blood and sweat to bring
water to the desert. My father

ARD'RIAN
(interrupting.
Impatient and
sarcastic)
Is buried on that mountain. Well,
who's going to be left to bury
you?

A vote of confidence is about to take place, and
Gosheven realizes he's about to lose it. He falls back
on the inate authority of an elected leader.

GOSHEVEN
Have you considered what this
evacuation means? We'll be a
displaced people, beggars at the
door, supplicants pleading for
a new home. And we've all seen
what the Federation's word is
worth. "We'll help you if you're
ever in trouble." Well, we were
in trouble, and thousands of us
died adapting to the radiation.
Where was the Federation? And
now we're in trouble again, and
all they can say is give up
everything! Well, I say NO!
You elected me to be your leader
-- follow me now! I don't think
our chances are as hopeless as
he says. And I'm willing to stake
our lives on it. Any objections?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

He rakes the crowd with a look. Some mutterings, but nobody's quite ready to lead the revolution.

GOSHVEN
(continuing)
Good, because here... we...
stand.

A few people, and the goons step up to pound Gosheven on the back, but most of the crowd remains huddled on the benches glancing from Data to Gosheven and back again. Haritath and Noe stand, and step away to talk in private.

ANGLE ON DATA
standing with Ard'rian.

DATA
(almost to himself)
And here you die.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
FADE IN:

33 INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM  (OPTICAL)  

Wesley, Geordi and O’Brien. There is now one intact test dummy, and three trashed ones. These are three exhausted people. They’ve been working round the clock. Maybe a day’s growth of beard on O’Brien.

WESLEY
Maybe if we try by-passing the auto-sequence, and decompile the pattern buffer?

GEORDI
(shrugs)
Okay, do it. It’s no crazier than anything else we’ve tried.

Wesley drops down by the panel, and begins to tinker while Geordi places the last test dummy on the platform. Suddenly the transporter console blows a fuse. Electricity races across the panel, and the console goes dark. O’Brien is not a happy man. Wesley slowly stands up. O’Brien struggles with himself, but can’t master it.

O’BRIEN
Ensign Crusher.

WESLEY
Yes, sir.

O’BRIEN
If you ever touch my transporter again... I’ll kill you.

WESLEY
Sorry, sir.

CUT TO:

34 INT. ARD’RIAN’S HOUSE  -  NIGHT

Data is seated on the couch staring intently at the far wall. Ardy is staring out a window. Suddenly she turns and crosses to Data. Stands directly in front of him.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

It takes him a moment to pull himself back from his contemplations. He looks up at her.

ARD’RIAN
I’ve made my decision.

A beat as they regard one another.

ARD’RIAN
(continuing)
I’m going to leave.

Data remains silent. Ardy turns, and crossing to the coat rack pulls down a battered old jacket.

ARD’RIAN
(continuing)
How much can I take?

DATA
Not much.

ARD’RIAN
(needling reassurance)
I hope I’m doing the right thing.

Data, filled with doubt after his defeat at the meeting.

DATA
I hope so too.

She clutches the jacket, her expression is stricken.

ARD’RIAN
No! You have to be sure for both of us. You can’t have doubts... when I’m... leaving... everything.

And then she’s crying, tears run down her face. Data crosses to her, studies this phenomenon, tries to understand the woman’s emotional response.

(CONTINUED)
34 CONTINUED: (2)

Then taking her by the shoulders he turns her to face him, and gives her a kiss on the lips.

ARD'RIAN
What was that for?

DATA
You appeared to require it.

ARD'RIAN
I didn't think you could respond this way.

DATA
My intent was to make you feel better. Did I succeed?

ARD'RIAN
(calculating)
Yeah... a little.

Seduction time, but the usual signals between a man and a woman are not applicable here. Ardy is counting on Data's logic. It doesn't fail her.

DATA
Would a continuation of this behavior increase the level of comfort?

ARD'RIAN
(shyly)
Yes.

Data again leans in and kisses her. His arms hang at his sides.

ARD'RIAN
If you... put your arms... around me, it would help.

DATA
Like this?

ARD'RIAN
Yes.

They kiss again. Ardy's hand is on the back of his head, pulling him in for another kiss, and another. She's increasing the heat with each embrace. Things are becoming rather passionate.
ANGLE ON ARD’RIAN
as she comes up for air, and mutters faintly.

    ARD’RIAN
    It’s working. Don’t stop.

    DATA
    This behavior usually ends with
    --

    ARD’RIAN
    Yes!, I know.

    DATA
    Do you wish to --

    ARD’RIAN
    Yes.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)
Travelling at warp speed.

INT. CAPTAIN’S READY ROOM
Picard has brought Troi in for consultation.

    TROI
    In our dealings with other
    non-humanoid races there has been
    some point of reference; not so
    with the Hrathan.

    PICARD
    We must have something in common.
    We communicate.

    TROI
    Barely. The Hrathans have learned
    several Federation languages, but
    theirs continues to elude us.

    PICARD
    (have we tried?)
    Telepaths?

    TROI
    Attempted and failed.

(CONTINUED)
37 CONTINUED:

PICARD
This is ludicrous!

(CONTINUED)
TROI
No, sir, the fact that any alien race communicates with another is quite remarkable.

She lifts Picard's tea cup from the desk.

TROI
(continuing)
We are stranded on a planet. No language in common, but I want to teach you mine.

Troi points to the cup.

TROI
(continuing)
S'smarith. What did I just say?

PICARD
Cup? Glass?

TROI
Are you sure? I might have meant liquid, clear, brown, hot. And we conceptualize the universe in relatively the same way.

PICARD
Point taken.

TROI
During your talks you must be extremely accurate. The treaty is 500,000 words. The length was to accommodate the Hrathan. They consider our language irrational, and demanded this level of complexity to avoid any future misunderstandings. They are also extremely time conscious. Each moment in a Hrathan's life is planned to the minutest detail.

* 

PICARD
Then their timetable for the settlement of Cygna V --

TROI
Will be equally as rigid, yes.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (3)

RIKER'S COM VOICE
Captain, Hrath'an warship on visual.

PICARD
On my way.
(to Troi)
So it begins.

They EXIT onto:

INT. MAIN BRIDGE

The tension on the Bridge is palpable. Picard moves swiftly to the command station. Riker relinquishes the command chair.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN (OPTICAL)

Where a Hrath'an ship hangs ominously.

PICARD
Open hailing frequencies. This is Captain Jean-Luc Picard of the Starship Enterprise.

We again have a vision of the mirrored, shadowed, shifting place. A hint of a watcher in the shadows.

HRATHAN
Your purpose, Enterprise?

PICARD
We desire face-to-face negotiation to settle the crises on Cygna Tau Ceti.

Troi hands him a PADD.

PICARD
(continuing)
We are entitled to consultation under paragraph five hundred and sixty-three subparagraph nine.

A beat as the Hrath'an look it up.

HRATHAN
Granted.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

The screen again shows the Hrathan vessel.

RIKER
Was that an invitation?

PICARD
I'm going to take it as such.
Number One, you have the Bridge.

Troi and Picard EXIT.

CUT TO:

ARD'RIAN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY (OPTICAL)

Ardy's handling around coffee cups to a gathering of grim faced people. Data is standing by the fireplace. Haritath is seated on the couch with his wife. Noe, and SIX other colonists are present.

HARITATH
It's one thing for Gosheven to say he's staying. It's another for him to make that decision for all of us -- especially when our lives may be in danger.

DATA
What do you wish to know?

HARITATH
The Federation will resettle us?

DATA
Yes.

ARD'RIAN
I don't know about the rest of you, but I've made up my mind -- I'm leaving.

HARITATH
(impressed)
I know how much you love this place.

ARD'RIAN
More than I can express, but not enough to die for it.

(CONTINUED)
Haritath glances around at the other colonists. There are nods of agreement.
HARITATH
All right, that’s it then --

The front door opens, and Gosheven, and the two council/goons ENTER armed with their fascisti. Gosheven is startled to see the gathering.

GOSHEVEN
(to Data)
Still stirring up trouble?

ARD’RIAN
Since when is talk trouble?

Gosheven ignores her.

GOSHEVEN
It’s over. Don’t you get it? You lost.

DATA
I appear to be reversing that defeat.

Gosheven is infuriated by Data’s remark.

GOSHEVEN
Final warning; keep your damn mouth shut and stay away from my people!

DATA
They are not your people. They belong only to themselves.

Ardy grins "you tell 'em, Data!", and slips her arm around the Android's waist.

Gosheven’s hand snakes out, catches her by the upper arm, and spins her away from Data. Gosheven releases her. Ardy is spitting like an angry cat, and starts to wade back in. Data wards her off with a hand.

DATA
No! They cannot harm me.

GOSHEVEN
Watch me!

The human gives Data two punishing blows to the face. The Android’s head snaps from side to side, but there is no obvious damage and he remains on his feet.

(CONTINUED)
Murmurs from the crowd.

Gosheven kicks Data's feet out from under him. The Android falls. Goon One gives Data a hard kick. Data gets up.

ARD'RIAN
HIT THEM!

DATA
No.

GOSHEVEN
You damn coward! Fight me!

Blows continue to rain down on the Android from all three men. Some of them connect. Others he dodges with a display of martial arts. One of the goons slams a chair across Data's back. The Android whirls, snatches it away from the man, and flings the chair across the room.

DATA
I have the power to do you all grave bodily harm, but this violence is unnecessary.

Gosheven suddenly yanks his taser from his belt, and lands a powerful blow to Data's head. There is an effect like BLUE LIGHTENING about the Android's body. Skin tears back, and circuitry is revealed. The crowd reacts. Ardy screams, and Haritath grabs her before she can join the fight. Data is knocked off his feet.

(CONTINUED)
Okay, something that works. The goons unlimber their staffs, and the three men proceed to beat the snot out of Data. EFFECTS as the tasers hit. The instinct for self-preservation is strong. Data wards off a hit by Gosheven, and lunging off the floor seizes the human by the throat.

**40A ANGLE ON GOSHEVEN**

The Android's hand about his throat as Gosheven realizes the inhuman strength of the creature, and we see fear for the first time.

Data forces himself to release the human, and turning onto his side he curls into a ball, and folds his arms over his head. A few more blows from the goons, but it's hard to hit a man when he's down, and refuses to fight back. The crowd's sympathy is with Data.

Ardy is crying with fear and fury; still trying to free herself and come to Data's aid. At last it ends. Gosheven has vented his rage against this sexual and political rival. He is panting, his face damp with sweat.

GOSHEVEN
You people get on home!

A couple of people bolt for the door. The other four remain stubbornly in place. Gosheven steps up to Ardy. She bares her teeth, and slaps him over and over until he catches her wrist.

GOSHEVEN
You'll see I'm right.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

He drops her wrist, and he and the goons EXIT. Ardy runs to Data and drops to her knees beside him.

CUT TO:

INT. HRATHAN SHIP (OPTICAL)

Picard and Troi MATERIALIZE. What surrounds them bears little resemblance to a ship. Darkness hangs like bats in the corners. What little light there is filters through swirling mist. As they look down the effect is as if they are walking on black ice, and tiny lights, like flickering eyes twinkle beneath the floor’s surface.

HRATHAN
Advance and speak.

Troian and Picard exchange glances for they can see no sign of the creature they are speaking with. They step forward, and are pinned in a bright light.

PICARD
Director, we will comply with your request to remove the colony on Cygna V, but we need three weeks.

HRATHAN
I do not comprehend? What is it you seek?

PICARD
More time.

HRATHAN
The time is upon us. We carry the membership.

PICARD
You can begin your debarkation. We won’t interfere with one another.

(CONTINUED)
HRATHAN
Remove the humanoids.

PICARD
I'm trying! But a ship won't be available for three weeks.

HRATHAN
You are in violation.

PICARD
I have admitted that! I'm only asking for a little tolerance.

HRATHAN
Section five hundred and one, paragraph seven hundred and sixteen, subparagraph five -- unwanted lifeforms inhabiting H class worlds may be removed at the discretion of the Hrathan corporate.

PICARD
You offer your ship for transport?

HRATHAN
No. We will remove. It is our right.

Now it's Picard's turn to be bemused by the Hrathan.

PICARD
I'm sorry, I don't understand.

HRATHAN
You need time, Picard of the Enterprise, we will save time. We will eradicate the human infestation.

PICARD
(outraged)
They are not vermin! They are citizens of the Federation and I will not permit this travesty!

HRATHAN
Intelligent converse is impossible. You do not discuss, you gibber.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
Between intelligent species of good will --

Suddenly the Hrathan transporter kicks in, and slams Picard and Troi back to the Enterprise. They have been rudely thrown out on their ears.

INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

The startling EFFECT of the Hrathan transporter and Picard and Troi APPEAR. Riker, Worf, Beverly and the Supernumeraries at Conn and Ops react. Beverly whips out a tricorder and checks them out.

Picard and Troi are both very disoriented, staggering slightly. Riker steadies them both.

RIKER
I think the Hrathan just hung up on us. Again.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

42A INT. ARD’RIAN’S LIVING ROOM (FORMERLY SCENE 45)

Data is stretched out of the sofa. Ardy is seated at his side, laying a damp cloth on his forehead. Noe, and FIFTEEN colonists watch.

Data pushes her hand away, and sits up slowly.

ARD’RIAN
(concerned but scolding)
Lie down! You’re in no shape --

DATA
Do not fuss. I will manage.

ARD’RIAN
Men! You think you’re made out of steel.

Data gets to his feet.

HARITATH
(relieved laugh)
This one is.
(to Data)
The word is spreading. People are mad as hell and ready to break with Gosheven.

DATA
Excellent. Haritath, go to Gosheven, tell him I am coming into town, and I am going to destroy the aqueduct.

HARITATH
They’ll be waiting for you!

DATA
I certainly hope so.

Haritath and Ardy exchange glances. Off Data’s expression.

CUT TO:
EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

The Enterprise hanging motionless in space with the Hrathan warship.

INT. MAIN BRIDGE

As before.

PICARD
(to Worf)
Go to yellow alert. Shields up.

WORF
Aye, sir.

PICARD
Mister Riker, put us nose to nose with the Hrathan ship. If she makes a move, echo it.

RIKER
Aye, sir.

PICARD
Open a hailing frequency.

WORF
They're not responding, sir.

PICARD
(in a white rage)
They don't have to answer. They just have to listen! Hrathan vessel, you will have to crawl over me to get at the colony on Cygna V!
47 INT. MAIN BRIDGE – CONTINUOUS

   WORF  
   No response.

   PICARD  
   Get me that damn treaty! They've been beating me over the head with it for three days. Let's see if we can't find something which can be turned to our advantage.

   (CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RIKER
We’re going to try and beat them
at their own game?

BEVERLY
(aghast)
The treaty contains five hundred
thousand words!

PICARD
Then there must be a few which
will favor us.

WORF
(glumly)
We are going to regret Data’s
absence.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE - CYGNA V (OPTICAL)

The town square. The streetlights touch the purifying
plant with a stark white light. Gosheven and his goons
stand shoulder to shoulder in front of the plant and
aqueduct. Their staffs are out. They are ready.
Behind them are a number of colonists, they nervously
await the outcome.

At the far end of the street Data comes walking toward
Gosheven. Behind him are Ardy, Haritath, Noe, and
FIFTEEN colonists. Data’s expression is set, almost
grim. He has a phaser.

Gosheven and the goons shift, preparing for the fight.
Data swings up his phaser, and stuns the two goons.
They drop like puppets with cut strings. Startled
reaction from Gosheven. Murmurs from the colonists.

Data paces in a wide circle, addressing all of them.

DATA
I hope you were all paying close
attention. Because I am one man
with a phaser, and you see the
result.

GOSHEVEN
GET HIM!

(CONTINUED)
Several men break from the group of colonists behind Gosheven and rush Data. He sweeps his phaser across them, and they collapse.

**DATA**
This phaser is set on stun. When the Hrathan arrive there will be hundreds of them, and their setting will be for kill.

Data switches the setting on the phaser, whirls, and blasts the pump on the aqueduct. It grinds to a halt, and a stiny stream of water trickles into the dirt.

**DATA**
(continuing)
Are you still eager to fight?

Data rakes the crowd with a glance.

**DATA**
(continuing)
And the Hrathan may not offer you a target. They could irradiate the entire planet from orbit. You will die never having seen the face of your killers.

Data walks deliberately to Gosheven. This is it, the two stags squaring off for leadership of the herd. Gosheven is still ready to fight. He takes a swing with his staff. Data catches it, breaks it across his knee, and flings it aside. The Android turns his back on Gosheven -- the ultimate contemptuous snub. Faces the colonists.

**DATA**
(continuing)
Now all of you . . . get packing.

The colonists meekly disperse. The mantle of leadership has passed.

(CONTINUED)
Gosheven, slump shouldered, bends and scoops up a handful of mud at the base of the silent pump. All that’s left of his dream. Data moves to join him.

DATA
(quietly)
If you bleed into the dirt it remains dirt. It does not care, and it will not remember.

GOSHEVEN
I really was willing to stay and die.

DATA
I know that, but it is just a thing, and things can be replaced. Lives cannot. Live, rebuild and be remembered.

GOSHEVEN
You could have killed me tonight at Ardy’s house.

DATA
Killing was always the thing I wished to avoid.
(a beat)
And now, your people need you.

GOSHEVEN
They’ve got you.

DATA
I am not their leader.

For a long moment it hangs in the balance. Then Gosheven wipes his hand on his pants, and walks back to assist his groggy goons to their feet. They move off.

OMITTED

ANGLE ON DATA
Relief. He pulled it off. He looks down at the phaser. With an expression of distaste he holsters it. He looks up to find Ardy gazing at him with an expression of pride and love.
OMITTED

INT. MAIN BRIDGE (OPTICAL)

Troi is seated at Science One with Picard hanging over her shoulder. Riker and Worf are at Science Two. Pages of treaty crawl past on both screens.

WORF
This is hopeless. Fighting would be preferable.

A look from Riker.

PICARD
That's it.

He indicates a clause.

TROI
I don't follow you, sir.

PICARD
Worf, get me the Hrathan.

WORF
(just heard the reprieve)
Yes, sir!

Picard, Riker and Troi return to the command station. The strange Hrathan scene replaces a view of the ship.

PICARD
Pursuant to paragraph one thousand two hundred and ninety I formally request third party arbitration of our dispute.

A beat while they look it up.

HRATHAN
Agreed.

PICARD
And further, pursuant to subsection D, three, I name the Grizzelas to arbitrate.

HRATHAN
Grizzelas?

Riker glances, puzzled, at Troi.

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

RIKER
(mouths)
Grizzelas?

Troi quells him with a look.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
Unfortunately they are currently
in their hibernation cycle, but
they'll awaken in six months, and
then we'll get this matter
settled. Now, do you want to
wait... or give me my three weeks?

HRATHAN
Absurd. We carry the membership!
We brook no delay!

PICARD
Then I declare the treaty in
abeyance!

HRATHAN
Wait! Negotiation is --

Picard gestures to Worf -- cut the transmission. Worf
obeys. A long beat.

RIKER
(smiling)
You enjoyed that.

PICARD
You're damn right.

WORF
Captain, they are hailing us.

Picard studies his nails. Takes a turn around the
Bridge. Settles himself back in the command chair.

WORF
(continuing)
Sir?

PICARD
Let them sweat.
(a beat)
On screen.

HRATHAN
You may have your three weeks,
Picard of the Enterprise.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
(with careful enunciation)
Thank you.

The screen returns to a view of the Hrathan ship pulling away. Instant release of tension. Suddenly the Turbolift doors open, and Geordi ENTERS. He is looking frazzled. People’s expressions reflect the thought that "dear God, he did it."

GEORDI
Captain, we can do it! We can fix the transporters.

PICARD
Excellent.

GEORDI
It’ll take fifteen years, and a research team of a hundred --

PICARD
(dryly)
Mister La Forge, I believe we will postpone.

GEORDI
(with a grin)
Yes, sir.

Geordi EXITS.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE – CYGNA V – DAY

Data and Ardy standing awkwardly at the steps of the shuttle. This is goodbye and it hurts, and she doesn’t want him to see that it hurts.

ARD’RIAN
My father told me to find a man who was good with his hands. But he didn’t warn me that after I’d found him he might not stick around.

DATA
But you are also leaving.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

ARD'RIAN

Yeah.

Jam the hands deeper into the pockets. Dig out another inch of dirt with a boot toe.

(CONTINUED)
DATA
I shall remember you.

ARD'RIAN
Oh sure.

DATA
Ardy, I am incapable of forgetting anything. I shall remember our time together exactly; each word spoken, each action replayed with perfect clarity.

This is a little embarrassing. And now Data's really wound up -- better to talk piffle than have to deal with this uncomfortable situation.

DATA
(continuing)
My neural filaments process memories --

ARD'RIAN
Data! I don't care how. I want to know why. Why will you remember me?

DATA
Your support aided me in my understanding of the qualities of leadership.

Swell, what every woman wants to hear.

ARD'RIAN
(distant)
Glad I could help.

Data senses he's supposed to do more. But what? And how? And for him, a little bit why?

DATA
I will remember your beauty -- both of face and spirit.

(CONTINUED)
ARD’RIAN
(brave smile)
Well... it’s not much, but it’s
something.
(a beat)
And from you that’s the most I
can have, isn’t it?

A little hopeful, but Data stares at her mutely. For
a long moment their eyes are locked. She gives herself
a shake.

ARD’RIAN
(continuing)
At least I didn’t cry. I promised
myself I wasn’t going to cry.
(with a grin)
Well, if you’re ever in my part
of the galaxy look me up.

For her this was the break. She turns to walk away.

DATA
(softly)
For company?

Ardy turns back. Her heart’s in her eyes, grin firmly
in place.

ARD’RIAN
For company.

Data holds out a hand to her. She steps forward and
lays her hand in his. The tiniest squeeze from Data.
He climbs into the shuttle, and the door closes. Off
her expression.

CUT TO:

INT. SHUTTLE (OPTICAL)

Through the port we can see the bulge of the planet.

DATA
Shuttle craft Onizuka requesting
landing clearance.
55 INT. CAPTAIN'S READY ROOM
Picard pacing thoughtfully.

PICARD
Welcome home, Mister Data.
Mission accomplished?

56 INTERCUTS

DATA
Mission accomplished, Captain.
When the transport ship arrives
they will find the colony ready.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
Well done, Commander.

DATA
I am reluctant to accept your praise, sir.

PICARD
Oh?

DATA
My ultimate solution had very little to do with sound command procedure. It was neither logical nor rational.

PICARD
Did you achieve your purpose?

DATA
Yes.

PICARD
Then it was a sound decision.

DATA
But I succeeded only because I was more intimidating than my opponent.

PICARD
And that makes you uneasy.

DATA
Yes, sir.

PICARD
(thoughtful)
No captain ever sleeps easy. The decisions that we make live on to haunt us.

DATA
I do not welcome this knowledge.

PICARD
Data, fifteen thousand people have been saved by your action. You can take comfort in that.

(CONTINUED)
DATA
I do. I only regret that a little
part of me was lost in the
process.

Picard reacts. He understands. Sometimes command is
an ugly business. In Data's case innocence has been
tarnished.

Data stares thoughtfully out the port of the shuttle
at the receding planet.

Off Data's expression as we:

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END