STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Liaisons"
(fka "The Journey")

#40277-254

Story by
Roger Eschbacher & Jaq Greenspan

Teleplay by
Brannon Braga

Directed by
Cliff Bole

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SECOND DRAFT
JUNE 28, 1993
FADE IN:

1 INT. WORF'S QUARTERS

CLOSE ON WORF'S FACE. He looks disgusted. Off camera, his hands are working furiously at something... and he grows more and more agitated by whatever he's doing...

2 WIDEN TO REVEAL

Worf standing in front of a mirror. He is wearing a Starfleet DRESS UNIFORM -- a thigh-level tunic with pants underneath. He is attempting to tie an ornate SASH around his chest, but it isn't easy. He steps back and takes a look -- it's crooked and sloppy. Frustrated, he undoes the sash and starts tying it again. He just can't get it right...

The door CHIMES.

WORF

Enter.

RIKER ENTERS, also in a dress uniform. He's surprised to see that Worf is not ready.

RIKER

Worf, they're going to be here any minute.

Worf tugs at his sash -- it's hopeless.

WORF

I am having... problems.

Riker moves over and starts to help him tie the sash.

RIKER

Worf, if I didn't know you better, I'd say you were trying to procrastinate.

WORF

Klingons do not procrastinate.

Riker gives him a look, and Worf is forced to back down a bit.

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

WORF
(continuing)
It is a... tactical delay.

RIKER
(tying sash)
Look, I know you don't want to do this... but you were specifically requested by the Iyaarans to be one of the Federation's representatives. What are we supposed to tell them -- that you don't feel like it?

WORF
No...
(beat)
I am simply not comfortable with diplomacy. It is not one of my strengths.

RIKER
Well... if you want to make your way through the ranks, then you'd better make it one of your strengths.
(ties sash)
There.

They look in the mirror. Worf eyes his dress uniform -- the sash... the short-hemmed tunic.

WORF
I hate these uniforms.

RIKER
Why?

WORF
They look like... dresses.

RIKER
Worf, that is a remarkably outmoded and sexist attitude, and I'm surprised at you.

They head for the door.

RIKER
(continuing)
Besides, you have great legs.

(CONTINUED)
OFF Worf's look...

CUT TO:

INT. SHUTTLEBAY

An ALIEN SHUTTLECRAFT sits in the bay. PICARD and TROI (Picard in his jacket, carrying a duffel bag; Troi in dress uniform;) are facing the shuttle. Riker and Worf are also present. Clearly, this is a very important moment for all of them. Except for Worf, who looks distinctly uncomfortable.

The shuttle doors OPEN and three distinctive-looking aliens -- IYARIANS -- step out to greet the group. AMBASSADOR LOQUEL... AMBASSADOR BYLETH... and the shuttle's PILOT, VOVAL. All three wear featureless clothing -- there are NO ornaments or extraneous styling whatsoever -- it should suggest a purely functional, utilitarian garment. Their facial features are humanoid, but rather indistinct and expressionless.

Picard steps forward to greet the Ambassadors.

PICARD
Ambassador Loquel... Ambassador Byleth. I'm Captain Picard.
Welcome aboard the Enterprise.

The Ambassadors bow politely, a ceremonial gesture.

LOQUEL
It is our pleasure to be here, Captain.

PICARD
We are honored to be the site of the first cultural exchange between the Iyarian people and the Federation.

BYLETH
Yes, yes. The next seven days should prove most illuminating.

Loquel gestures at the Vretilian pilot.

LOQUEL
Allow me to introduce Voval. He will be taking you back to our homeworld.

Picard nods and smiles at the pilot.
PICARD
Pleased to meet you.

The pilot stares back silently, a neutral expression on
his face. It throws Picard off for just a second, then --

PICARD
(to Ambassadors)
Well. I'm looking forward to
meeting with the Premier of Iyar.
Being the first Federation
representative to set foot on the
Iyarian home world will be an
honor I cherish all my life.

INLCUDE WORF
as the diplomatic pleasantries continue. He is bored
stiff... he's not looking forward to this experience.

LOQUEL
The honor is ours, Captain. We
are joyous that you could find
time to meet with us.

PICARD
Thank you.

LOQUEL
Thank you.

Worf rolls his eyes.

PICARD
We have a reception planned in
your honor where you'll meet the
entire Senior staff. But first,
allow me to introduce the
diplomatic liaisons you requested.

He gestures toward Troi and Worf.

PICARD
Counselor Deanna Troi from the
planet Betazed. And Lieutenant
Worf, from the Klingon Empire.

Troi takes a step toward Loquel, offers a warm and
genuine smile.
TROI
Ambassador Loquel, it's an honor to meet you. May I show you to your quarters before we attend the reception?

LOQUEL
Please.

Loquel picks up his bag and follows Troi toward the door. Picard looks to Worf, who steps forward a little stiffly. He speaks in a formal tone of voice, awkward with his new role as diplomat.

WORF
Ambassador Byleth... I look forward to conducting our diplomatic mission with you in a most --

Byleth is dismissive, rude -- he waves a hand toward his bags.

BYLETH
Yes, yes. Here are my bags. You will show me to my quarters.

Worf is momentarily taken aback. Byleth looks at him, impatient.

BYLETH
Time is short, Lieutenant Worf. Please. My bags.

Worf glares at him, about to lose his temper -- but Riker shoots him a cautionary look. Worf swallows his pride with difficulty, picks up the bags... keeps his voice even and tries to be as pleasant as a possible.

WORF
This way... Ambassador.

Worf and Byleth head for the door. Picard and Riker exchange an amused look -- this is going to be interesting...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER
ACT ONE

FADE IN:

(NOTE: Episode credits fall over opening scenes.)

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

at impulse.

INT. TEN FORWARD

The reception is in progress. Riker, Worf, Troi and DATA are there with several other Starfleet Officers. (They are back in their regular uniforms.) A large BUFFET TABLE has been set-up -- it's topped with various FOOD and DRINKS.

ON TROI AND AMBASSADOR LOQUEL

moving along the buffet table. Troi holds an empty plate; Loquel also holds a plate, but his is piled high with food. As they talk, he keeps putting more food onto his plate.

TROI

So first thing tomorrow, I thought I’d take you on a tour... show you the operational centers and the residential decks of the ship. Then after that, I thought we might spend some time discussing some of the sociological underpinning of your society, and comparing them with Federation —

LOQUEL

Are you going to eat?

Troi stops.

TROI

Excuse me?

He gestures at her empty plate.

LOQUEL

You have no food on your plate. Are you going to eat?

(continued)
TROI
Oh... actually, I was waiting
until we got to the dessert tray.

He looks at her, not entirely clear on the concept.

LOQUEL
"Dessert..." What is that?

TROI
It's something we eat after the
main course. It's usually very
sweet... usually very bad for
you. We eat it purely for
pleasure.

(beat)
If you ask me, it's the best part
of any meal.

He considers this.

LOQUEL
My people eat only for nourishment
only. Not for... sensual
gratification.

TROI
(lightly)
Well, you're missing a lot of the
fun. Here...

Troi leads him to the DESSERT TRAY, which is filled
with various treats. Loquel looks on with fascination.

TROI
(continuing)
Let me introduce you to some of my
favorites...

(indicates desserts)
This is called tira misu. Here we
have peach cobbler with whipped
cream. Tarvokian powder cake...

(beat)
But over here -- this is my very
favorite.

Troi indicates a dome-shaped confection half the size
of a bowling ball -- and completely covered with
chocolate.

(CONTINUED)
TROI
(continuing)
This is a Ktarian Chocolate
Madness. I'm not exactly sure
what's in it... but I think there
are at least seventeen varieties
of chocolate inside.

Troi takes a modest slice and puts it on her plate,
offers it to him. Loquel takes a small bite with his
fork... considers the taste... then reacts with intense
pleasure. He tries to find words to describe the
sensation...

LOQUEL
It is... it is...

TROI
Delicious?

LOQUEL
(smiles at the word)
"Delicious..."

Troi smiles.

TROI
Ambassador... I think we're going
to get along very well.

She gestures toward a table.

TROI
Shall we?

He nods. Troi moves toward the table to sit down.
Loquel eyes the dessert tray a moment, then innocently
picks up the entire platter of desserts and follows
Troi...

WORF AND AMBASSADOR BYLETH

sitting at a table. They both have food in front of
them. Byleth takes a bite of his food, reacts with
disgust. He shoves his plate of food toward Worf.

BYLETH
This is unacceptable.

WORF
I am sorry if you do not care for
our --

(CONTINUED)
BYLETH
Bring me new food. I require a higher protein and enzymatic content.

Worf takes a beat, tries to hold his temper.

BYLETH
What are you waiting for? Time is short.

(as if to a child)
Bring... me... new... food.

Worf stiffly stands up... and crosses to the buffet table. He picks up a new plate and eyes the food a moment... then begins to haphazardly slop food onto the plate.

Data moves up next to him.

DATA
(to Worf)
How is your diplomatic assignment progressing so far?

WORF
(terse)
Fine.

Worf picks up a large knife and begins to cut a piece of meat.

DATA
I have noticed that you are having difficulty with Ambassador Byleth. Do you require assistance?

Worf glances over his shoulder at Byleth, then considers the knife in his hand for a moment, his expression predatory.

WORF
No. I am considering a... different kind of diplomacy.

Data looks slightly alarmed.

DATA
Might I suggest a less... pointed approach?

A long beat, then Worf sets down the knife.

(CONTINUED)
WORF
Perhaps you are right.

DATA
I have found that in moments of
diplomatic tension, it is often
helpful to find elements of
commonality between the two
parties.

Worf considers this for a moment.

WORF
Ambassador Byleth is...
demanding... discourteous...
temperamental... rude...

DATA
(innocently)
Perhaps you should try building
from there. You share all of
those qualities in abundance.

Worf shoots him an irritated
look, grumbles and walks
off with the plate of food. OFF Data's look -- he was
only trying to help...

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - ALIEN SHUTTLECRAFT (OPTICAL)
The shuttle seen in the Teaser, at impulse.

INT. ALIEN SHUTTLECRAFT

The Pilot (Voval) seen earlier is at the controls.
(There's a small INSIGNIA PIN on the Pilot's uniform
at the sternum. It should not call attention to itself in
any way.) Picard is sitting next to him, trying his
best to strike up a conversation with the man. It
isn't easy. The Pilot is unresponsive, apparently
uninterested in anything Picard has to say.

PICARD
So... I understand your homeworld
has some of the most spectacular
crystal and rock formations in the
sector.

The Pilot keeps working.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

PILOT
(matter of fact)
Our planet contains numerous mineral formations.

PICARD
I'm looking forward to doing a little sight-seeing while I'm there...

There's a brief pause. The Pilot doesn't entirely understand the concept.

Why?

PILOT

PICARD
Well... I'd like to have the chance to appreciate the natural beauty of your planet.

The Pilot just stares straight ahead. An awkward beat.

PICARD
(continuing)
Is there any place in particular that you recommend I visit while I'm there?

No.

PILOT

Picard sees that a conversation with the man is all but impossible.

PICARD

Yes, well... what's our ETA at Iyar?

PILOT
Seventeen hours, thirty-two minutes.

Picard reacts -- it's going to be a long trip.

PICARD
Splendid.

Picard stands.

PICARD
I think I'll go update my itinerary...

(CONTINUED)
Picard moves toward the rear of the shuttle. Suddenly --

WHAM! The shuttle is JOLTED and all of the lights GO OFF. The shuttle DROPS OUT OF WARP. EMERGENCY LIGHTS come up. Picard quickly sits down.

PICARD
What happened?

The Pilot scans the console.

PILOT
There has been a system wide power interruption.

PICARD
What's the source?

PILOT
(working)
We have entered an energy disruption field. I do not recognize the configuration.
(beat)
We have lost warp power.

Picard quickly works the console.

PICARD
There's no record of any field like that in this system...

The shuttle ROCKS HARD and keeps TREMBLING.

PILOT
(off console)
We are losing maneuvering capability. Attitude controls failing. All systems off-line.

The shuttle is LURCHING to and fro -- it's all they can do to hang on. Picard scans the navigational console.

PICARD
There's an M-Class planet orbiting the third planet. Can we reach it?

PILOT
I will try.

As the Pilot works...
11 EXT. SPACE - ALIEN SHUTTLECRAFT (OPTICAL)
as it TUMBLES, barely in control, toward a small PLANET.

12 INT. ALIEN SHUTTLECRAFT
As before, trembling.

PILOT
Entering lunar atmosphere...
(work)
Prepare for impact.

They brace for collision --

13 EXT. SPACE - THE PLANET (OPTICAL)
The shuttlecraft SPIRALS down through the planet's atmosphere... and disappears from sight...

CUT TO:

14 EXT. LUNAR SURFACE (OPTICAL)
A rocky, inhospitable surface. It's windy, and large spider-like formations of PLASMA LIGHTNING can be seen arcing up from the ground in the distance, lighting up the darkened sky.

15 MOVE TO REVEAL
The alien shuttlecraft lies wrecked on the surface.

16 INT. ALIEN SHUTTLECRAFT
It's dark. Smoke hangs in the air. Emergency lights are flickering weakly. The light from the distant plasma lightning FLASHES through the windows. The Pilot is slumped over the controls, semi-conscious, a nasty-looking WOUND on his forehead.

17 ON PICARD
lying on the floor, disoriented. He sits up, grabs hold of a console and pulls himself to his feet... looks around the shuttle, spots the Pilot, moves to him.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

PICARD

Voval...

The Pilot stirs slightly and moans in pain. Picard glances him over, eyeing the wound on his forehead.

PICARD  
(continuing)
It looks like you've got a severe concussion... try not to move.

Picard moves to the COM console...

ON COM CONSOLE

A distinctive panel with several diamond-shaped controls on it (NOTE: It is undamaged and functioning). Picard hits a few buttons.

PICARD  
(to com)
Picard to Enterprise...
(beat)
Picard to Enterprise... do you read me?

No response -- just static. He hits a few more controls... reacts with frustration...

PICARD
I can't get through... too much atmospheric interference...

Picard makes his way to the rear of the shuttle and manages to find his duffel bag amidst the debris. He opens the bag and pulls out a tricorder, flips it open and scans in a wide circle...

PICARD  
(off tricorder)
There's a structure and some energy readings... about two kilometers south of here... there might be someone there who can help us...

Picard snaps the tricorder shut and moves to the Pilot, carefully takes off his jacket and wraps it around the man.

PICARD
I'm going to try and find the structure. Do you understand?

(Continued)
CONTINUED:

The Pilot manages a nod.

PICARD
Try to stay conscious. And don't leave the shuttle... there's some sort of plasma energy on the surface.
(beat)
I'll be back as soon as I can.

Picard moves to the shuttle doors and studies them for a moment... finds a manual latch, pulls down on it and forces the doors open...

EXT. LUNAR SURFACE/ALIEN SHUTTLECRAFT - CONTINUOUS

Picard walks outside, bracing himself against the wind. Somewhere offscreen, plasma lightning is FLASHING. He scans the region with his tricorder, then begins to make his way across the rocky terrain with great difficulty...

NEW ANGLE (OPTICAL)

Picard trying to move quickly. Offscreen, A BRIGHT FLASH of plasma lightning causes him to stop and hang back. After a beat, he presses on. The wind is howling...

Suddenly, a TENDRIL of PLASMA LIGHTENING ARCS UP from the ground a just few feet away. Picard stops and tries to take cover behind a large rock. Too late:

A quick series of PLASMA BOLTS ARC UP in a CRACKLING WEB from the ground all around him. Picard is KNOCKED off his feet by the electrical blast -- and he lands HARD against a large rock. He falls to the ground, unconscious.

A few beats go by...

A SHAPE

is moving among the rock formations. It's a humanoid figure... its identity hidden by the dim light. The figure makes its way toward Picard...
CLOSE ON PICARD

still unconscious. After a moment, TWO HANDS reach into frame and firmly grip him by the shoulders. As the hands drag him away...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
FADE IN:

23 EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL) at impulse.

24 INT. WORF'S QUARTERS

Worf is lying in bed, fast asleep. After a moment, the door CHIMES. Worf stirs slightly. The door CHIMES again and Worf wakes up. He straggles out of bed, groggy, crosses to the door and touches a control. The door slides open to reveal --

Ambassador Byleth, who has a stern expression on his face.

BYLETH

You're late.

WORF

(reacts)

Late... it is five in the morning!

BYLETH

I told you last night I wanted to meet at this time. We are supposed to tour the arboretum and bio-labs.

WORF

I do not recall you saying anything about --

BYLETH

Are you calling me a liar?

Worf bristles.

WORF

No... I simply do not remember the conversation.

BYLETH

I will simply have to add this to your list of inadequacies.

(beat)

Now, don't just stand there. Get dressed and meet me in the arboretum.

(CONTINUED)
He turns and walks off down the corridor. OFF Worf's reaction -- he can't take much more of this...

CUT TO:

INT. CORRIDOR

Troi and Ambassador Loquel are walking along, mid-conversation. Loquel is carrying an elaborate-looking cup of orange-colored liquid with a straw sticking out of it -- it looks like the 24th century equivalent of a "Big Gulp." Throughout the scene, he takes little sips of it.

TROI
This deck is devoted mainly to stellar cartography, biological research, and astrophysics... but there are also twelve staterooms used for crew quarters.

Loquel takes a sip of his drink and gives a little moan of pleasure at the taste. He seems more interested in the drink than anything else.

TROI
(continuing)
We have over a thousand people on board, engaged in all facets of the ship's --

Loquel holds out the drink to Troi.

LOQUEL
Are you sure you don't want some of this drink...

TROI
(remembers)
This... "papalla juice?"

LOQUEL
No, thank you. I'm still recovering from all those desserts last night.

LOQUEL
Are you sure? It is very...

TROI
"delicious."

I'm sure.

Loquel stops, again holds the drink out to Troi, insistent.
CONTINUED:

LOQUEL
Please. You have been so kind. Please.

Finally, Troi takes the cup and takes a cursory sip.

TROI
Yum.

Loque looks satisfied, takes back the drink. They continue walking.

TROI
(continuing)
Next we're going to go to Deck Eight, which is interesting because it's not really finished. It's sort of a... multi-purpose deck. Sometimes when we need an extra lab... another cabin... or just a large space to conduct a particular experiment, we --

As Troi speaks, they pass a POTTED PLANT in the hall -- a lush and beautiful fern. Loque stop and eyes the plant, curious, analyzing.

LOQUEL
(re: plant)
This is a secondary source of oxygen?

Troi laughs.

TROI
Well, yes. I guess it is producing oxygen. But that's not why it's here. It's an ornamental plant. We like the way it looks.

He looks at her.

LOQUEL
(trying the word)
"Ornamental..."

TROI
(explains)
The plant has an esthetic purpose.

LOQUEL
"Esthetic..."?

They continue walking.

(CONTINUED)
TROI

Don't you have things that you
like to look at... or experience?
Paintings... sculpture... music...
things like that?

LOQUEL

No...

TROI

We call it art. Sometimes our
cultures like to express
themselves through various
physical forms. The result is
something pleasing to look at, or
listen to...

As Troi speaks, something catches Loquel's attention --

LOQUEL'S POV

A MOTHER and her SON (a six year-old boy) walk past a
nearby intersection...

LOQUEL

reacts to the sight, curious. He turns and follows the
mother and daughter.

TROI

doesn't notice at first. She keeps walking.

TROI

(continuing)

In fact, why don't we visit one of
our Holodecks? I'll take you on
a tour of Renaissance Florence...

She stops, realizing that Loquel is no longer alongside
her. She glances around, but he's nowhere to be seen.

TROI

(continuing)

Ambassador?

Troi turns and walks down another hall...
INT. ANOTHER CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Troi looks up and down the hall. It's empty.

TROI
(calls out)
Ambassador Loquel?

Suddenly, the high-pitched SQUEALS of alarmed children are heard somewhere nearby. Troi reacts, runs down the hall toward the sound...

She stops at a door marked "DAYCARE CENTER". She quickly enters the room...

INT. DAYCARE CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Troi ENTERS and stops at what she sees --

INCLUDE ROOM

Loquel is standing in the middle of the room, holding a YOUNG GIRL out with both hands, at arm's length. He stares at her with intense curiosity, as if he's never seen a child before. The girl is staring back at him with a startled expression on her face.

Several other CHILDREN are watching wide-eyed, as well as the daycare TEACHER. Loquel glances at Troi.

LOQUEL
(re: children)
What are these?

Troi approaches Loquel, speaks calmly.

TROI
They're children.

LOQUEL
"Children"...
(eyes girl)
Is this tonight's dessert?

The girl's eyes widen.

TROI
(quickly)
Ambassador... children are our offspring. Our young. They grow into adults over a period of many years... they grow into beings like us.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
TROI (Cont'd)
(beat)
We definitely do not eat them.

Loquel carefully sets down the girl, who quickly moves to the Teacher's side. He eyes the other children.

LOQUEL
(re: children)
Offspring.

TROI
Ambassador, I'm curious... how does your species procreate?

LOQUEL
(matter of fact)
Post-fertilization cellular compounding. We emerge from the natal pod fully grown.

I see...

Loquel turns to the other children, fascinated by them. He smiles.

LOQUEL
Hello, children.
They stare at him, a little bit suspicious.

TROI
(to children)
Children, this is Ambassador Loquel. He's a very special guest on board the Enterprise. He's here to learn about us.

Silence. Loquel takes a step toward the kids, looks at a pile of colorful BLOCKS that are scattered in front of them, where they were playing. He crouches down and picks up a block.

LOQUEL
What are these?

One child, A YOUNG BOY, speaks up.

BOY
They're blocks.

LOQUEL
Blocks...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

BOY
Yeah... you build things. Like this...

The boy begins to stack the blocks one by one, making a little structure. Loqueel watches carefully.

LOQUEEL
Why do you do this?

BOY
I don't know... 'cause it's fun.

Loqueel reacts to the word.

"Fun."

LOQUEEL
Loqueel begins to mimic the boy's movements with the blocks. Another couple of kids join in the play. Soon Loqueel sits down on the floor and plays right along with them. After a moment, he glances at Troi and smiles at her.

LOQUEEL
Blocks are... fun.

Troi smiles. As she exchanges an amused look with the teacher...

CUT TO:

INT. CARGO FREIGHTER

CLOSE ON Picard, who is lying on his side on a small make-shift cot... unconscious. The room is dimly-lit. Gradually, Picard wakes up... groggy and disoriented... tries to sit but is too weak... He looks around...

PICARD'S POV - THE ROOM

It's a long, tunnel-like room, with a single door along one side. A few half-charred consoles can be seen... and several cargo containers, which are nothing more than shapes in the dim light. The room is CANTED slightly, as if it's been in a crash.

PICARD (OPTICAL)

lays his head back down... takes a ragged breath... then reacts to a sharp pain in his side. He looks down at his body...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

His shirt has been taken off. He moves to touch his side, and his hand activates a small ENERGY FIELD which jolts his hand away.

Picard reacts... and sees that a small METALLIC DISC with several blinking lights on it has been attached to his rib cage. What is it...?

A NOISE is heard across the room. Picard looks around, trying to see in the darkness.

PICARD
Is someone there? Who's there...?

No answer. But something catches Picard's eye... and he squints into the darkness... still very groggy...

INCLUDE THE ROOM
As one of the dark shapes slowly begins to move, rising from where it was sitting in a chair. Clearly, it is a person -- and it is moving toward Picard. Picard watches with growing concern as the person moves closer... almost menacing. He tries to sit up...

PICARD
What do you want? Who are you...

A WOMAN'S HAND moves into the light and gently places a finger on Picard's lips.

WOMAN'S VOICE
Shhh...

The hands lay Picard back down on the cot... placing his body just so... almost nurturing. Picard looks up at her, tries to make out her face...

ON THE WOMAN (TAMARA)
as her face moves into the light. She is human, mid-thirties... a very pretty woman whose face has seen many years of pain. Her skin is very pale... her clothes torn in a few places, ragged. She wears a distinctive-looking NECKLACE with a pendant around her neck.

She stares down at Picard with an unreadable face.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
Who... are you?

A long moment, then the woman moves back into the shadows and walks toward the door.

PICARD
(continuing)
Wait. Someone else was with me... the pilot of the shuttlecraft... he's wounded... please, he needs your help...

The woman stops by the door. She speaks, her voice hoarse.

TAMARA'S VOICE
He's dead.

The woman opens the door to reveal the lunar surface outside. Wind howls into the room, then the woman exits and slams the door shut.

OFF Picard's reaction -- where is he... and who is this mysterious woman...?

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
FADE IN:

37  EXT. PLANET'S SURFACE - CARGO FREIGHTER
The ship lays wrecked on the surface.

38  INT. CARGO FREIGHTER

A few hours later. CLOSE ON Picard asleep, lying on the cot. He wakes with a start, alarmed, and glances around the room... then finally remembers where he is...

A small FIRE is now burning in a cargo container the center of the room. The woman seen earlier is sitting on a chair a few feet away, silently watching him. Her face is visible in the flickering light. It's a mysterious and somewhat eerie sight...

Picard eyes her.

PICARD
Hello again.

The woman just stares at him. Picard notices a tray of FOOD sitting on a crate next to the bed -- a bowl of soup, a cup of water, and a piece of alien fruit.

PICARD  (continuing, re: soup)
This smells good. Thank you...

He sits up awkwardly, still very weak... takes the bowl of soup... tries a sip of it. The woman watches him, looking a little curious now...

PICARD  (continuing)
Do I have you to thank for saving my life, as well?

She doesn't answer. Picard glances around the room. He tries to draw her out.

PICARD  (continuing)
This is a Terellian cargo freighter, isn't it? Is this your ship? Were you one of the crew?

A beat. Then the woman shakes her head, no.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD  
(continuing)  
Were you a passenger?

She nods.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
It looks like you crashed... from  
the looks of it, some time ago...  
(beat)  
How many people survived the  
crash? Are you the only one?

She nods. Picard eyes her.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
Well, you're certainly not a  
Terellian... unless you've lost  
two of your arms...

She smiles slightly at the humor, and a little of the  
tension in her face melts away... the moment is broken.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
Are you human?

She nods.

PICARD  
(continuing)  
What's your name?  
(beat)  
I'm Jean-Luc Picard. I'm a  
Starfleet officer.

A long beat... then the woman speaks, her voice hoarse  
and halting, as if it's difficult for her to get out  
the words.

TAMARA  
Tamara.

PICARD  
Tamara...  
(beat)  
Tamara, is there anyone else on  
this planet?

She shakes her head, no.
38 CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD
(continuing)
How long have I been here?

She shrugs.

TAMARA
Not long.

PICARD
How long have you been here?

She hesitates.

TAMARA
I... don't know. I never see the sun here... I've... lost track of time.

PICARD
Do you remember when your ship crashed?

She thinks a moment.

TAMARA
Stardate... 40812.0...

PICARD
(reacts)
That's seven years ago.

Tamara reacts, disturbed. She stands. It's a frightening revelation.

TAMARA
Years...

PICARD
Tamara... it's all right...

She becomes agitated, starts moving about the room, breathing rapidly.

TAMARA
Seven years... I thought... one year... or two maybe... but how could it be seven...

(beat)
I'm going to die here... I'm going to die here.

PICARD
Tamara, listen to me...

(CONTINUED)
TAMARA

No...

PICARD
Tamara, listen to me!

The sound of command in his voice makes her stop.

PICARD
(continuing)
On my shuttle, there's still a lot of equipment that survived the crash. We can use it to contact Starfleet. They'll send a ship for us. We can leave.

She stares at him -- a tiny bit of hope creeps into her expression.

TAMARA
Leave?

PICARD
Yes. Both of us. Together. If you can guide me back to the shuttle...

He tries to sit up, but the device next to his wound causes an energy field to FLASH ON AND OFF and he winces in pain. Tamara quickly moves to him, lays him back down.

TAMARA
Don't move... it's bad... it's...
it's...

She stumbles on her words, frustrated.

PICARD
Don't worry... I won't move.

She takes a breath -- focuses her thoughts and looks at him.

TAMARA
You have... three broken ribs.
I...

She can't find the words... makes a "sewing" motion with her hand.

PICARD
(onto idea)
You sutured my wound...

(CONTINUED)
STAR TREK: "Liaisons" - 6/28/93 - ACT THREE

TAMARA
Yes... yes... I sutured your wound. The device will protect it... and... hold the bones in place... let them...

She interlocks her fingers, again searching for the right words.

PICARD
Let them knit... let the bones knit...

Tamara is relieved, pleased.

TAMARA
Yes, that's it. Let the bones knit.

She smiles at him, and for the time we can see she has a lovely smile.

TAMARA
(continuing)
It's been a long time... since I talked to anyone...

A beat, then she sits down on a crate by the bed, thoughtful.

TAMARA
(continuing)
I used to talk... to myself. But then I thought... it might mean that I was crazy. So I stopped talking...

Picard tries to comfort her.

PICARD
I understand. I'd probably do the same thing myself.

TAMARA
Really?

PICARD
Yes.

She takes a moment.

(continued)
TAMARA
It will be a while before you should walk. You have to be... quick on your feet here.

Picard thinks.

PICARD
I think I know what you mean. There was some sort of... plasma discharge from the ground. I remember it arcing around me...

TAMARA
It's everywhere... but if you're quick... you can get out of the way.

PICARD
Tamara... maybe you could go to the shuttle... bring the equipment back here...

TAMARA
(nods)
I can do that.

PICARD
Good.

(beat)
Go into the cockpit, and look for a small com panel on the left side of the instrument bay. It has several diamond-shaped controls on it. See if you can remove it, and bring it to me.

She nods, determined.

TAMARA
Stay in bed. I'll be back.

She moves to the door... walks out side and shuts the door. There's a beat, then the door opens again and she walks inside the doorway and moves to him. She lightly touches his face.

PICARD
What is it?

TAMARA
I just... wanted to make sure you were real.

(CONTINUED)
A beat, then she EXITS. OFF Picard's face as he lays back down, exhausted...

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)
at impulse.

INT. ENGINEERING

Worf and Byleth are walking through the room, Worf showing him around. GEORDI is working in the background, as well as a couple of Engineering N.D.s. Worf is trying his best to be polite. He indicates the large back-wall graphic of the Enterprise.

WORF
The Engineering sections encompass seven (TECH) decks of the secondary hull. Deck thirty-seven contains the antimatter storage facility. Deck thirty-six houses the --

BYLETH
(cuts in)
What is the mass flow rate of the antimatter replenishment stream to the containment pods?

Worf looks at him, thrown off by the detailed technical nature of the question.

WORF
Excuse me?

BYLETH
The antimatter replenishment rate. What is it?

WORF
I am... not certain of the specific rate.
(work console)
I shall consult the engine specifications...

Byleth glances around the room, impatient.

BYLETH
Perhaps there is someone here who does know the answer.

(CONTINUED)
Worf tenses, tries to keep his temper at bay.

WORF
This will only take a moment, Ambassador. If you would be patient...

Byleth turns to him, contemptuous.

BYLETH
What kind of culture produces a small-brained exo-vertebrate like you?

WORF
(hard)
I am Klingon. We are a race of warriors.

BYLETH
Well, it's easy to see how the humans conquered you.

WORF
We were not conquered. There an alliance between --

Byleth looks at Geordi, moves to him.

BYLETH
You. Are you smarter than this one?

Worf looks at Geordi, seething. Geordi hesitates, on the spot, not sure how to respond -- there's no good answer to this question.

GEORDI
Ah... well... why do you ask?

BYLETH
Never mind.

Byleth walks off toward the warp core chamber. Worf and Geordi exchange a look.

WORF
Good answer.

Byleth is now walking around the warp core, eyeing it with interest. Worf takes a breath, then moves to him.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

BYLETH
I wish to see the Bussard collectors. Take me to them.

It's all Worf can do to keep from strangling him.

WORF
This way.

Worf leads him onto the ELEVATOR. There is an awkward moment as they position themselves stand side-by-side, very close. Byleth begins to sniff the air around Worf.

BYLETH
Do you bathe?

OFF Worf's outrage...

INT. OBSERVATION LOUNGE
Worf, Riker and Troi. Worf is on his feet, fuming.

WORF
I am going to kill him! With my bare hands, I will take his neck and --

RIKER
Worf.

Worf paces around the room, wild-eyed, angry.

WORF
I have failed in my mission Commander. I am clearly a bad diplomat. For the sake of the ship and the Federation... I request reassignment.

RIKER
Denied.

WORF
But Commander, these Vretilians are aggressive... arrogant... provoking! They cannot be reasoned with!

TROI
Ambassador Loquel is quite pleasant.

(CONTINUED)
They look at her.

TROI
I will admit, he's a little...
unusual.

RIKER
What have you learned about him so
far?

TROI
He seems preoccupied with...
recreation. In the past two days,
I've spent more time in Ten
Forward and the Holodeck than in
the past two months.
(beat)
And he's obsessed with food.
Especially chocolate.

RIKER
You must be in heaven.

TROI
To be honest... he's testing the
limits of even my chocolate
fetish.

WORF
(seizing on this)
You see? They are insane!

TROI
Worf... they're curious about us.
Their approach may seem a little
odd, but they're just trying learn
about our culture.

WORF
(outraged)
Byleth asked me whether I bathed.

RIKER
What was the answer?

Worf shoots him a look.

RIKER
(continuing)
Sorry, I couldn't resist.
(beat)
Look, she's right, Worf. We've
got to be patient with them.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
RIKER (Cont'd)
I have noticed Ambassador Byleth can be a little... abrasive. Maybe what we need is to loosen things up a little bit... meet in a less official capacity.

WORF
Like what?

RIKER
Well... how about a friendly game of poker?

Troi smiles, sparkling to the idea. OFF Worf's doubtful expression...

EXT. PLANET'S SURFACE
The crashed cargo freighter, as seen before.

INT. CARGO FREIGHTER
It's hours later. Picard is lying on the cot, alone. The fire is still burning. A quiet moment passes... then Picard reaches for the cup of water -- it's empty. He glances across the room, sees a large jug of water sitting on the floor. He decides to get up...

Slowly, painfully, he manages to get to an upright position... hobbles out of bed and across the room to the jug of water. The exertion is intense, he's sweating... he takes a long drink of water then sets down the jug...

He looks around the cargo room... the WIND is whistling outside. He carefully makes his way to the door, trying not to jar his ribs too severely. He grabs a handle on the door and tries to open the hatch -- it won't budge. It's locked.

He's a little puzzled by this. He turns and looks around for another exit, but there are no other doors. As he considers, there is a CLANG of metal at the door, and it swings open, letting in blast of WIND which almost knocks Picard off his feet.

Tamara ENTERS. She's shocked to see him on his feet.

TAMARA
What... what are you doing?
Back... back in bed!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

She takes him by the arm and gently but firmly guides him to a nearby chair.

TAMARA
(continuing)
I told you to stay. You'll hurt yourself.

PICARD
I just wanted a drink of water...

TAMARA
I'm sorry. It's my fault. I should have kept it by the bed...

(beat)
From now on, tell me what you need... and I'll get it.

(smiles)
I'm the doctor... you're the patient.

Picard nods.

PICARD
Understood.

Tamara eyes him a moment.

TAMARA
How... how are you feeling?

PICARD
My side hurts... but I think it's healing.

TAMARA
Good...

She looks at him, excited and a little proud.

TAMARA
I got it. The com panel you wanted... it's here.

She moves to the door, opens it, comes back inside holding the small gray COM PANEL from the shuttle. She carries over to Picard and sets it on a cargo container near him.

TAMARA
(continuing)
It wasn't easy... I had to force open the equipment bay to get it...

(CONTINUED)
Picard begins to examine the com panel, tapping controls, tries to get it working. But it won't respond.

**PICARD**
I'm going to have to boost the output field to break through the atmospheric interference...

As he's talking, Picard keeps trying to get the com panel to work.

**PICARD**
(continuing)
With any luck, we'll be able to send out a distress beacon...

Still no response from the com panel. Picard is puzzled.

**PICARD**
(continuing)
There's something wrong with it...

He turns over the com panel, and reacts to what he sees...

**ON THE COM PANEL**
The rear of the com panel is **CHARRED** with **SCORCH MARKS**, heavily damaged.

**RESUME**

Tamara looks worried.

**TAMARA**
What's the matter?

**PICARD**
The entire transmitter module's been destroyed... it's useless...

Picard eyes the charred circuitry a moment... then sets down the com device. He looks disappointed, and a little puzzled.

**PICARD**
I don't understand. The last time I saw it, this panel was operational...

(Continued)
TAMARA
I had to use a phaser to cut it free... maybe I accidentally damaged it... you can fix it, can't you?

PICARD
I'm afraid not.

Tamara stares at the com device. She looks suddenly anxious.

TAMARA
You mean... it's not going to work?

PICARD
No. We'll have to think of something else...

Tamara stands, growing frightened. She can't believe her hopes have been dashed.

TAMARA
It's got to work...

PICARD
Tamara, it's all right...

TAMARA
It's got to work!

She stands and grabs the com device.

TAMARA
(continuing)
Damn it, it's got to work!

She loses all control and SMASHES the com device angrily to the floor. She turns to Picard and focuses the anger on him.

TAMARA
(continuing)
Make it work! You promised to make it work!

PICARD
I said that I would try and --

TAMARA
You did! You said we'd get out of here! I believed you!

(CONTINUED)
Continued: (2)

Her breathing quickens -- she's losing control, hysterical.

TAMARA
(continuing)
I'm going to die here... I always knew it... I'm going to die here...

Picard grabs her firmly by the arm.

PICARD
Tamara --

TAMARA
No... let me go...

PICARD
Please --

TAMARA
LET ME GO!

She forcefully KNOCKS Picard away. Picard yells out in pain and falls off to the chair to the floor. Tamara reacts, horrified.

TAMARA
(continuing)
Oh my God, what have I done...

She rushes to his side, checks on his wound.

PICARD
(breathless)
I'm all right...

TAMARA
I'm sorry.... I'm sorry...

She presses her face into his chest and begins to cry softly. Her anger is gone... she's broken down...

TAMARA
(continuing)
I'm sorry...

They lie there on the floor a moment. Picard lays a gentle hand on her, comforting. He speaks quietly.

PICARD
We will get out here, Tamara. But it won't be easy... we need to work together...

(Continued)
Tamara slowly recovers, shaken... she raises her head and looks around the dark and decimated room... remembering her experiences here...

TAMARA
After we crashed, it took me a week to bury the bodies... I had to drag them outside... my friends... and I had to bury them...

She shudders at the memory...

TAMARA
(continuing)
I kept hoping that I'd be rescued... every day I'd set up a (TECH) flare... and I'd look up in the sky and wait for someone to take me away...
(beat)
...and it never happened. So the next day, I'd start all over again... set the flare... wait... hope... then nothing...

She gets a haunted look in her eyes...

TAMARA
(continuing)
There's a precipice that hangs over a gorge near here... I used to go there and stare down into the gorge... and think... I could just step off... and it would all be over...
(beat)
Then I realized... it was the hope that was driving me crazy... I had to accept that I was never going to get out of here...

Picard considers her.

PICARD
And then I came along... and gave you hope again...

She looks into his eyes... there is a desperation in her face.

(CONTINUED)
TAMARA
I can't go through that again. I need you to tell me we're getting out of here...
(beat)
I need you to promise me.

Picard stares at her for a long moment.

PICARD
I promise... no matter how long it takes, we will get out of here.

A beat... then she nods, feeling better.

TAMARA
Thank you. I really needed to hear that...

She carefully helps Picard back into the chair. As she lays him down, she leans in close and gently strokes the side of his face. She looks absorbed in the intimacy of the moment...

TAMARA
(continuing)
From the moment I saw you, I knew you were here to save me...
(beat)
I'll do anything you want... just don't leave me. I don't want to be alone again...

And she moves closer to him... closer... her eyes closing, mouth parting... and she kisses him tenderly on the lips. She pulls away... and whispers into his ear...

TAMARA
(continuing)
I love you...

A moment. Then she turns and walks away.

As Picard watches her go, clearly surprised and uncomfortable with what's just happened...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

46 INT. WORF'S QUARTERS

Riker, Loquel, Troi, Worf and Byleth are sitting around a table in that order, playing five card draw. The game is in progress. Loquel is eating from a small plate of chocolate candy, which he keeps nibbling on during the scene.

RIKER
I'll bet ten.

Riker tosses in a chip. The bet goes to Loquel. His cards are smudged with chocolate.

LOQUEL
I will "see" the bet.
(excited)
And I will raise... ten.

He tosses in two chips.

TROI
That's twenty to me...

Troi tosses in two chips. Worf studies his cards a moment.

WORF
I'm in. And I raise twenty.

He tosses in four chips.

BYLETH
You are bluffing.

Worf shoots him a look. Quickly and with feeling, Byleth tosses four chips into the pile -- but Worf notices that Byleth surreptitiously takes two of them from Worf's pile!

WORF
(to Byleth)
Excuse me, Ambassador. Those are my chips.

BYLETH
You are in error. Those chips are mine.

(CONTINUED)
WORF
I saw you take two chips from my pile.

Byleth's eyes widen. He stands.

BYLETH
You dare to accuse me of cheating?

Worf stands and faces him, glaring.

WORF
Yes.
As the argument escalates, Troi watches intently...

BYLETH
You are lying because you are losing the game!

WORF
Perhaps I am losing because you've been cheating all along!

It looks like this might come to blows.

RIKER
Wait a minute, let's just calm down...

Troi puts a hand out to Riker, stopping him. Riker throws her a surprised look.

TROI
(sotto)
I think Byleth's trying to get a rise out of Worf... let's see what happens...

Riker watches with her. Over this:

BYLETH
Even if I were cheating, how would a plodding animal like you know it?

WORF
(outraged)
You are an insulting... annoying... pompous fool! If you were not an Ambassador, I would disembowel you right here!

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

BYLETH
Do not let my rank inhibit you, Klingon!

Byleth gives Worf a little SHOVE. Worf's eyes widen with rage -- that's it. He GRABS Byleth and THROWS HIM into the table. Cards and chips go flying. Riker and Troi step out of the way. Loquell barely reacts, chocolate bar in-hand, apparently unconcerned.

Byleth looks up at Worf, suddenly very pleased.

BYLETH
Yes! Good!

He KICKS Worf backward, sending him slamming against the wall. Worf is enraged. He swings and PUNCHES Byleth squarely in the face.

BYLETH (recovering)
Excellent... very good!

Byleth lunges for him and the two men FIGHT -- each of them getting off a PUNCH or two before Byleth finally breaks away from Worf, a look of exhilaration on his face.

BYLETH
Wonderful!
(beat)
But that is... sufficient. Thank you, Lieutenant Worf. I think I understand now. That was a very effective demonstration.

Worf looks at him in astonishment.

WORF
What?

Troi steps forward, starting to realize what's been going on.

TROI (to Byleth)
You mean... you've been trying to provoke Worf... you wanted to start a fight...

(CONTINUED)
BYLETH
(innocently)
Of course. I have been designated to study conflict among your peoples. In preparing for this mission, I chose the most aggressive member of your crew.
(re: Worf)
But perhaps I have chosen the wrong liaison. Lieutenant Worf is too... diplomatic.

Reactions.

WORF
If it's a fight you want... I believe I can accommodate you. But I suggest we go the Holodeck, where we can discuss your interest in conflict in greater... detail.

BYLETH
(pleased)
By all means.

Byleth heads for the door. Worf pauses, then moves to a nearby wall and takes his BA'TLETH SWORD from the wall. He looks to Riker and Troi and smiles, then EXITS.

Troi looks to Loquel, who is sitting patiently at the table, eating a piece of chocolate.

TROI
(to Loquel)
Is that what you've been trying to do... provoke me to study conflict?

LOQUEL
(innocently)
No. I am here to study... pleasure.
(beat)
Can your replicator make... "hot fudge"?

As Troi and Riker exchange a mystified look -- what are these Ambassadors up to...?

CUT TO:
EXT. PLANET'S SURFACE

The crashed cargo freighter, as seen before.

INT. CARGO FREIGHTER

It's a few hours later. Picard is sitting in the middle of the room on the floor, working on the com panel seen earlier, trying to repair the burned out backside. He is wearing his shirt again. Several other pieces of EQUIPMENT from their shuttle are arranged on the floor in front of him. He's been working for a while.

Tamara ENTERS through the single door, carrying a small TOOL. Her appearance has changed. She has cleaned herself up quite a bit, and her hair is tied back in a simple but pretty style. Clearly, she has made an effort to be more attractive.

TAMARA
(re: tool)
Would this help?

Picard looks at the tool with surprise.

PICARD
A plasma torch... yes. Where did you find one?

TAMARA
In the equipment bay. I've never had a use for it... until now.

Picard takes the tool.

PICARD
Thank you.

Tamara smiles and sits down next to Picard, watches him with interest. Throughout the scene, she keeps smiling at Picard with affection. It makes Picard uncomfortable. Clearly, she is becoming infatuated with him.

TAMARA
How's it coming?

PICARD
I'm trying to regenerate the power cell. With any luck, I should be able to get the com panel working again.

(CONTINUED)
TAMARA
People like you amaze me. I was never very good with technical things.

PICARD
I wouldn't say that at all...
(indicates TECH device on his side)
You did an excellent job of adapting a shield emitter to generate a restriction field.

She smiles, blushing slightly. Picard eyes the device.

PICARD
(continuing, re: device)
Speaking of which... I think it's time I remove it. I'm starting to feel a lot better...

Picard reaches for the device, but Tamara quickly stops him.

TAMARA
(quickly)
No... no, let me do it. You have to be careful when you disengage the field...

She starts to take off the device.... and Picard reacts to a slight pain in his side.

TAMARA
(continuing)
See... you're not ready yet. Your bones still need to mend...

Picard nods.

PICARD
Very well...

He returns to the com panel. Tamara watches him work for a moment.

TAMARA
Jean-Luc... if we ever do get out of here... will you promise to show me this starship of yours... the Enterprise?

PICARD
Of course. I'd be happy to.
CONTINUED: (2)

She holds his gaze for just a little too long. Picard breaks her look.

**PICARD**

(continuing)

If you'll hand me that (TECH) coil, I think I can get this power cell working.

She picks up a piece of equipment, and as she passes it to him she takes the opportunity to hold his hand. Picard stops.

**TAMARA**

I meant what I said a while ago...

(beat)

I do love you.

Picard takes a deep breath, sets down the com panel. He has no choice but to confront the issue head on now. He doesn't want to hurt her feelings, but it must be dealt with. It's awkward.

**PICARD**

Tamara. I... care for you a great deal. I am grateful for the way you saved my life... and I think you are a warm and compassionate person. And I have a great deal of sympathy for what you've gone through... alone... here on this planet...

(beat)

But to be honest... I don't think you're really in love with me.

Tamara reacts, genuinely surprised.

**TAMARA**

How can you say that? Of course I love you...

Picard chooses his words carefully.

**PICARD**

I'm the first person you've seen in seven years. And I've brought you the hope of leaving this place for the first time...

(beat)

Isn't it possible that maybe your feelings are a little... confused right now?

(Continued)
TAMARA
No... I know how I feel. And I love you.

This is getting difficult. Picard tries to help her understand.

PICARD
Look... sometimes when a person has gone through a traumatic experience, like yours... they come to look upon the person who rescues them as a sort of... larger than life figure. Sometimes they become infatuated with their rescuer. They may even think that... they're in love with that person...

Tamara thinks about this a moment.

TAMARA
So... you're not attracted to me?

PICARD
That's not true. You're a very lovely woman. I just think this is... a little premature. You don't know anything about me.

Tamara looks away... grows very thoughtful... and finally seems to yield a little.

TAMARA
I understand... and I'm sorry if I made you uncomfortable.

Picard smiles gently at her.

PICARD
It's all right.

(beat)

Let's get back to work...

Picard begins to work on the com panel. Tamara keeps looking at Picard, a very thoughtful expression on her face. OFF her look...

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. PLANET SURFACE

The crashed cargo freighter.
INT. CARGO FREIGHTER

A few hours later. Picard and Tamara are sitting on the floor around a cargo container, which has a modest MEAL sitting on top of it — two bowls of soup, some alien fruits and vegetables. The mood is much more relaxed now. A fire burns nearby. The conversation is light, and Tamara seems more at ease. Picard is finding that he really does like this woman — she's warm and enjoyable. Mid-conversation.

PICARD
...My brother still lives outside Labarre, with his wife and son.

TAMARA
Tending the same grapes that your father did... I find that amazing.

PICARD
Yes. It's a long tradition in our family.

TAMARA
But you broke that tradition...

PICARD
Yes. It was a subject of much... debate in our house. My father did not approve. In fact, we didn't to speak to one another for several years.

Tamara seems fascinated by Picard's words.

TAMARA
You mentioned an Uncle Gaston...

PICARD
Oh... yes. He was a charming rouge. Quite a fascinating person for a boy of twelve.

He smiles at the memory.

PICARD
(continuing)
I remember one summer I went to visit him in Italy... in a small town called Asulo. Gaston owned a stable with twenty-five beautiful Arabian mares. I'll never forget the first time he put me on a horse.

(MORE)
PICARD (Cont'd)
I was so excited that I couldn't wait to gallop across the fields.
So I took the riding crop and I lashed it against the horse's hindquarters...

A beat.

PICARD
(continuing)
I spent the next two weeks mending a broken collarbone and a torn tendon... and I wasn't able to sit down for a month.

Tamara laughs.

TAMARA
Tell me more.

Picard is getting a little self-conscious.

PICARD
I've done nothing but bore you with stories from my childhood for the past hour. Aren't you tired of it yet?

TAMARA
Not at all. I just... want to know more about you.

PICARD
Turnabout is fair play, Tamara.
It's time for you to tell me something about your life... (beat)
What about your family?

Tamara looks away for a moment and frowns -- apparently disturbed by the inquiry.

TAMARA
I... don't like to talk about my family.

PICARD
Oh. I'm sorry.
(beat)
What about... your career? What were you doing aboard this Terrelian freighter anyway?

(CONTINUED)
Tamara hesitates, clearly not wanting to talk right now.

TAMARA
I told you... I was just a passenger.

PICARD
A passenger to where... from where?

A long beat. Then Tamara's face lights up -- she stands, excited by something.

TAMARA
I have a surprise for you...

She moves to a corner of the room and opens a small cargo container... begins to dig around.

TAMARA
(continuing)
I've been saving this ever since the crash... it's the only thing that wasn't damaged...

She pulls out a small BOX and carefully carries it to the table, as if it's very delicate.

TAMARA
(continuing)
There were a lot of times that I wanted to open this box... but I never did. It was the last piece of the life I had before I came here... It was all I had. I wanted to hold on to it...

She sets the box on the table.

TAMARA
(continuing)
Go ahead. Open it.

Picard opens the box, revealing small rows of COOKIES.

PICARD
Shortbread...

(CONTINUED)
TAMARA
(nods)
I know it seems silly... but somehow... just knowing that I had these made eating soup made of (TECH) roots a little easier...

She indicates the cookie box.

TAMARA
(continuing)
They promised me if you didn't break the seal, they'd stay fresh for forever...

Picard smiles. He takes out a cookie. Tamara also takes a cookie. Picard holds out his cookie, as if to make a toast.

PICARD
To the future.

TAMARA
To the future...

They tap their cookies together... then they each take a bite. The cookies are like rocks -- they can barely chew them. Picard tries to put on a good face.

PICARD
Oh... mmm...

They both sit there chewing a moment... then Tamara starts to giggle.

TAMARA
They're awful, aren't they?

PICARD
They're positively the worst cookies I've ever tasted in my life.

They begin to laugh at the irony. She places a hand on his arm.

TAMARA
You should've seen the look on your face... you were trying so hard to pretend they were good...

PICARD
No... 

(CONTINUED)
50 CONTINUED: (4)

She gets a little closer to him, shakes him playfully with both hands.

**TAMARA**

Yes, you were... if I hadn't said anything, you were going to say they were delicious...

**PICARD**

Well, I didn't want to spoil your feast... after seven years.

More laughing. It's a genuinely warm moment.

**TAMARA**

(laughing)

You would've eaten the whole box!

Picard indicates the (TECH) device on his side.

**PICARD**

(laughing)

Yes... and you would have had to use this (TECH) coil to make a stomach pump!

They continue to laugh. Her arms have now worked around his neck and shoulders... and suddenly she pulls him toward her and **kisses** him passionately. Picard returns the kiss for a moment... then has to pull away.

**PICARD**

Tamara...

**TAMARA**

Don't fight me...

She pulls him close and kisses him again, this time more insistently. Picard reaches up, takes her arms and gently but firmly pulls her away to break the kiss.

**PICARD**

Tamara, please. We talked about this.

**TAMARA**

I know. And now I know more about you. So it's all right.

(beat)

I love you...

She goes for him again, but this time Picard won't let her get that close.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
No. I'm sorry. This isn't right.

A look comes over Tamara's face -- puzzled, disturbed... and vaguely threatened.

TAMARA
You should love me now. We're together... alone... we depend on each other... we know about each other... we've shared an intimate moment...

Picard isn't quite sure how to handle this.

PICARD
Tamara... you must understand, I like you a great deal...

TAMARA
Then love me.

Tamara forcefully throws him back onto the ground. Picard gasps in pain from his side, which momentarily makes him incapable of resisting. She grabs his face and forces herself on him, kissing him passionately. The moment builds, then --

Picard uses one of his arms to THROW her off of him. She immediately comes back at him, her face intense with passion. Picard holds up his arm to ward her off --

PICARD
Tamara, stop it!

She tries to get at him with a strange ferocity.

TAMARA
I love you!

They grapple for a moment... and then finally Picard manages to PUSH HER OFF. As it happens, Picard's hand catches her necklace and it BREAKS away from her neck as it pulls away in his hand.

Picard leans against the wall and looks at her, breathing heavily from the effort. Tamara looks at him for a moment... confused... hurt... and then her face changes. She looks suddenly very serious.

TAMARA
I failed... you don't love me...
it's all over with...

(CONTINUED)
50 CONTINUED: (6)

She turns for the door.

PICARD
Tamara, wait... where are you going?

She opens the door and EXITS. The door slams shut behind her.

PICARD
(continuing)
Tamara!

Picard stands and staggers toward the door... dropping the necklace to the floor by the fire. He moves the door and tries to open it -- as before, it's locked from the outside.

PICARD
(calls out)
Tamara! Tamara!

He tries the door again. A moment goes by... Picard catching his breath... then, very distantly, a man's VOICE can be heard somewhere outside.

MAN'S VOICE
(calling out)
Captain Picard? Is that you?

Picard is surprised at the voice.

PICARD
(calls out)
Yes! Yes, I'm in here!

The voice is heard again, from the opposite side of the shuttle.

PILOT
Captain!

PICARD
Here -- here! The door's over here...

Picard pounds a fist on the door.

PICARD
(continuing)
Over here!

A couple of beats... then there's the sound of the door being unbolted from outside. The door opens to reveal:
51 VOVAL
the shuttle Pilot -- he's alive and well.
OFF Picard's shocked reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR
FADE IN:

INT. CARGO FREIGHTER

Continuous action. Picard and the Pilot looking at one another in surprise. (NOTE: The small insignia pin seen earlier on the Pilot's sternum is now gone -- this is a subtlety that neither we nor Picard should notice.)

PICARD

Voval...

The Pilot enters and Picard shuts the door. The Pilot is tired, but he looks okay.

PICARD

(continuing) How did you get here? I thought you were dead...

PILOT

Dead?

PICARD

Yes. There's a woman who lives here... she went to the shuttle... she told me you were dead...

The Pilot realizes what must have happened.

PILOT

Yes... that is understandable...

(explains)

When my species is injured, our metabolic rate slows until our body can heal itself...

(beat)

This state could easily be mistaken for death.

PICARD

I see...

The Pilot shivers a little, cold -- and he moves to the fire and begins to warm himself.

PILOT

When you did not return to the shuttle...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
PILOT (Cont'd)
I attempted to track you. The
surface conditions made it very
difficult...
(shivers)
So cold...

Picard glances toward the door, concerned.

PICARD
The woman... Tamara... she's still
out there. Did you see anyone?

No...

A beat, then Picard moves to the cot and grabs his
jacket, begins to get dressed.

PICARD
I have to find her. I'm afraid
she might do something
desperate...

He turns to the Pilot.

PICARD
(continuing)
You stay here -- give yourself a
chance to recover. I'm going to
look for her.

The Pilot moves to join him.

PILOT
We will go together.

Picard nods. As they EXIT...

---

EXT. PLANET'S SURFACE - CONTINUOUS

Picard and the Pilot ENTER the dark and WINDY
environment. Plasma lightning FLASHES off screen from
time to time. The Pilot gestures at the environment.

PILOT
There's a precipice about two
hundred meters from here...

PICARD
Let's go...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

The Pilot leads him along the rocky surface. FOLLOW them as they make their way over the rock terrain. At one point, Picard stumbles, the pain in his side making it difficult... but the Pilot catches him and they continue along, determined.

PICARD
(calls out)
Tamara...!

They continue walking...

EXT. PLANET'S SURFACE - ROCK LEDGE

Picard and the Pilot stop at a LEDGE that overlooks a bottomless CHASM. Picard looks into the darkness below with concern.

PILOT
Captain -- this ridge extends for a kilometer in either direction. I suggest we separate -- we can search it twice as fast.

Picard nods and they head in opposite directions...

EXT. PLANET'S SURFACE - ROCK LEDGE - ANOTHER LOCATION

Picard walking... searching... calling out...

PICARD
Tamara!

He keeps walking for a moment... then he sees something --

PICARD'S POV

Visible in the distance, standing near the edge of the cliff -- is Tamara. She's staring down into the chasm.

PICARD
Tamara -- don't!

Picard quickly makes his way to her. Tamara does not even look up at him. She's despondent.

TAMARA
Don't come any closer.

Picard stops several feet away from her -- tries to calm her down.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
You don't have to do this. I found Voval, the shuttle Pilot -- he's still alive. He can help us. The three of us can escape...

TAMARA
I don't care.

PICARD
You've waited seven years for this... don't throw it all away now just because of a... misunderstanding.

TAMARA
There is no misunderstanding. You don't love me...

PICARD
Tamara... we can talk about that later. What's important now is that you step away from the edge...

Tamara shifts her weight to one leg, and her body sways for a moment. Picard tenses, afraid she's going to jump -- but she turns around to face him.

TAMARA
I'll jump... unless you tell me you love me.

She backs up, now just inches from the edge. Picard looks at her for a moment -- it's her life versus his conscience. He makes the decision.

PICARD
All right... I love you. Now come to me...

He reaches a hand out toward her. Tamara smiles slightly, hopeful but wanting more.

TAMARA
Tell me how much you love me... describe the feeling...

Picard doesn't want to do this, but he wants to get her off the ledge, and he's willing to try anything at this point. He takes a breath, prepares to tell her what she wants.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (2)

PICARD
I love you more than... I can possibly describe. Ever since I first met you, I...

He stops. Something about Tamara catches his eye...

PICARD'S POV

ON TAMARA'S NECKLACE, which is now back around her neck. Even though the last time we saw the necklace, it was broken and lying by the fire.

RESUME PICARD

He knows something is wrong here. His expression hardens.

PICARD
No... no, I don't love you, Tamara.

TAMARA
What?

PICARD
I don't love you... because you've been manipulating me, haven't you?

TAMARA
Jean-Luc, what are you saying?

PICARD
Your necklace. I broke it. It was lying in the cargo freighter, by the fire... I left it there.

(beat)

Now it's whole again and back on your neck. How?

She ignores the inquiry.

TAMARA
Tell me how much you love me...

PICARD
No...

Picard is starting to put the pieces together...

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
(continuing)
Why did you find it necessary to
lock me inside the cargo
freighter? Were you afraid I
would go to the shuttle myself...
and see that it wasn't as badly
damaged as you said?

TAMARA
(urgent)
Tell me about your love... I must
know...

PICARD
And what about the com panel? You
said you may have damaged it while
cutting it out of the shuttle...
Did you? I find it hard to
believe you would be that clumsy
with the one piece of equipment
that could save you after seven
years of exile...

TAMARA
Jean-Luc...

PICARD
And why haven't you asked me more
questions about what's happened
during the years you've been away?
You have no curiosity... no
interest in anything that's
happened in the past seven years.
All you seem to be interested in
is me. Why?

Tamara steps dangerously close to the edge.

TAMARA
Jean-Luc, please...

PICARD
(pressing on)
And where's Voval? He couldn't
have gone far. Isn't it
convenient that he would arrive at
the freighter only moments after
you left. And then it was his
idea for me to come here to the
ledge... where I find you.... on
the cliff, about to jump. Very
well-timed, wouldn't you say?

(Continued)
58  CONTINUED:  (2)

Tamara just stares at him, a confused look on her face -- she isn't sure how to take this, isn't sure what to do next. She wavers at the ledge...

PICARD
(continuing)
Are you working together? Voval's the only one who could've gotten the necklace and given it you...

TAMARA
(urgent)
Tell me about your love -- or I will jump!

PICARD
Go ahead.

She blinks, unsure how to react to that statement.

PICARD
(continuing)
What are you waiting for? It's a high fall... at least two hundred meters. You should die instantly... if that's what you really want.

She glances down into chasm.

PICARD
(continuing)
But somehow, I don't think you will. The crash... you're being stranded here for seven years... the cookies... I don't think any of it's real.

Picard glances down and pulls open his jacket -- looks at the (TECH) device on his side.

PICARD
(continuing)
And I don't think this is real, either...

He pulls off the device.

TAMARA
Jean-Luc, no!

Picard takes a deep breath and moves around his arm experimentally.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
There's no pain. It would seem that my ribs are not broken after all...
(eyes device)
What was this really for... to keep me immobilized?

A long beat as Tamara's expression fades to resignation. She steps away from the ledge... and touches the pendant on her necklace --

TAMARA TRANSFORMS INTO THE PILOT, VOVAL. The necklace is now gone, and in its place we see that Voval is touching the small insignia pin at his sternum, which is actually an alien holographic projection device.

PILOT
I have failed.

Picard reacts, trying to understand.

PICARD
Failed in what? Voval... what was the purpose of all this?

Voval looks disappointed.

PILOT
My name is actually Ambassador Voval.

PICARD
Ambassador...

PILOT
My mission was to study human intimacy... specifically the concept you call love... in order to understand your culture.

Picard is astonished.

PICARD
So all this was part of a... diplomatic initiative? You staged the crash... faked my injury... and arranged an elaborate set of circumstances to see if I would fall in love with you?

(Continued)
PILOT
(innocently)
Of course. In our study of your culture, we did not understand certain concepts. Pleasure... conflict... love. These were alien ideas to us. So we sent three representatives to study them... to experience them...
(beat)
Our research showed that human love often occurs in isolated, intimate situations where bonds are formed during a crisis. Was this wrong?

Picard takes a moment.

PICARD
Well... let's just say that we're not used to such a... direct approach in our diplomacy. We prefer a more... objective discussion.
(beat)
Ambassador Voval... I must tell you that in our culture, what you've done would be considered dangerously close to a crime.

Voval looks at him in confusion.

PILOT
(tries the word)
"Crime..."?

Picard sees that they have a big gulf to cover. He steps toward Voval.

PICARD
We can... talk about that later. This need not harm our mission. But I think we should take a more... academic approach to these things from now on.

PILOT
I am sorry if I have offended you. I will let you guide our discussions from this point on.
(beat)
How do we begin?

Picard looks around the rough terrain.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD

The first order of business would seem to be getting off this planet. Am I to assume the shuttle is not as badly damaged as it looked?

PILOT

That is correct. We can leave at any time.

PICARD

Then let us leave... and we'll try a different area of human relations... let's start with friendship.

Picard holds out his hand. Voval takes it and they shake hands. A positive beat between them, then they turn and walk off across the rough terrain...

EXT. SPACE - THE ENTERPRISE (OPTICAL)

at impulse.

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's Log, Stardate 47069.3. I've returned to the Enterprise, after a five day visit to the Iyar Homeworld. Despite a troubled beginning, my cultural exchange with Ambassador Voval was a success.

INT. TEN FORWARD

Worf and Troi are sitting at a table. Worf is rubbing his back and shoulders -- clearly in a great deal of pain. Troi is nibbling at a tiny green SALAD.

Picard ENTERS the room and crosses to them.

PICARD

Mind if I join you?

Worf tries to stand to greet the Captain --

WORF

Not at all --

Worf groans in pain and sits back down. Picard takes a seat.

(CONTINUED)
PICARD
I heard about your day in Sickbay.

TROI
(to Worf)
It serves you right. Seventy-two hours of straight battle exercises is a bit much, don't you think?

WORF
(smiles at the memory)
It was... excruciating.

Picard eyes Troi's salad.

PICARD
Salad, Counselor?

Troi scowls at the plate.

TROI
Unfortunately, I've eaten more rich food in the past five days than I have in the past five years...

(beat)
The thought of dessert makes me a little sick.

WORF
(prodding)
You mean dessert like... chocolate --

TROI
(quickly)
Don't even say the word.

There's a beat. Picard grows thoughtful.

PICARD
I've been thinking about the Iyarians. I find them... refreshing.

(off their looks)
We tend to take a rather... balanced approach to life. Never too much, never too little. We always try to find the Golden Mean. It's nice to find a culture that's willing to take an experience to its furthest extremes.

(CONTINUED)
Beat. Troi looks down at her salad, which she wasn't enjoying anyway. She shoves the plate away from her... and reaches out and grabs a passing waiter.

TROI
(to waiter)
Three Ktarian chocolate madesses, please.

The waiter nods and walks off.

TROI
(to Picard, Worf)
Would you gentleman like to join me?
(smiles)
Or should I eat them all myself?

As they exchange a smile...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END