

STAR TREK- THE NEXT GENERATION

"The Contract"

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STAR TREK- THE NEXT GENERATION

"The Contract"

TEASER

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING *ENTERPRISE*- MORNING, DAY ONE

traveling through warp space.

ESTABLISHING SHIP'S CORRIDORS - MORNING, DAY ONE

of increasing lights and crew activity as the day begins.

INT. BRIDGE - MORNING, DAY ONE

where there is minimal bridge crew as none of the regular crew are on duty yet. CONN and OPS are talking quietly between themselves.

LT. CMDR. ANNA ISSACSON, the shift duty officer, is at SCIENCE 2 and ENSIGN CLARKE is at TACTICAL. ISSACSON'S attention is on CLARKE who is finishing a joke. She then turns back to the station to complete entry.

WORF enters from PORT-AFT TURBOLIFT and approaches CLARKE while ISSACSON goes to a synthesizer, requests coffee, and watches.

WORF

Situation report, Ensign.

CLARKE

All stations reporting normal operations, sir.
The last sensor sweep was negative.

WORF

(examining the console)
How recent is this information?

CLARKE

(nervous)
Twenty minutes, sir. But the computer is
monitoring for unusual activity ...

WORF

Ensign, we are searching for Ferengi activity in this sector. An automatic scan is not the most appropriate tool for this purpose.

CLARKE

Yes, sir. It won't happen again, sir!

CLARKE begins a full manual scan, anxious to please. WORF crosses over to ISSACSON, who is still sipping coffee.

WORF

Ensigns!

ISSACSON

Don't forget, you were one once too.

WORF

Ship's security is my responsibility.

ISSACSON

(sips coffee)

Still, don't you think you were a little hard on him?

ISSACSON watches WORF punch in the code, rather than using voice command, for his beverage.

WORF

When I am not on the bridge, I expect the officer on duty to behave as I would. (retrieves steaming cup, inhales deeply and takes a long swallow) Ahh...

ISSACSON

I assume you mean that in a professional sense?

WORF

Of course. (takes another sip)

ISSACSON

What is that anyway? It smells wonderful.

WORF

(seriously)

Hot chocolate. I never developed a taste for coffee.

DATA enters from STARBOARD-AFT TURBOLIFT and greets WORF and ISSACSON in passing.

DATA

Good morning Commander, Lieutenant.

ISSACSON

How are you this morning, Data?

DATA

All systems are... (pauses to reconsider question, then starts again) I am quite well, thank you, Commander.

DATA proceeds to OPS and accesses the station as WORF and ISSACSON watch.

WORF remains by synthesizer, watching bridge activity. ISSACSON moves down to COMMAND AREA as she finishes her coffee.

CLARKE

Commander! Sensors have just detected a vessel at extreme range. It appears to be drifting.

WORF crushes his cup, throws it in the recycler and then moves beside CLARKE at TACTICAL. ISSACSON takes the COMMAND CHAIR.

ISSACSON

Can you identify it, Mr. Clarke?

ISSACSON turns to face him as CLARKE stares at the console in confusion.

ISSACSON (CONT'D)

Well?

CLARKE

I can't identify it... it doesn't match the specifications of any known ship... except part of these readings look familiar.

WORF

Ferengi!

ISSACSON

Let's not jump to any conclusions. Reduce to impulse speed, please.

ISSACSON gets up and stands between OPS and CONN.

ISSACSON (CONT'D)

Well, Mr. Data, can we get a visual?

DATA

(touching panel, then looks up)
Adjusting viewscreen and magnification now.

INSERT - MAINSCREEN

as the starfield adjusts to show a point of light moving slowing, then jumps as the magnification increases.

Finally, the object resolves itself into a crude representation of the *Enterprise* of the early Federation designs.

BACK TO SCENE

ALL react, wondering if it is a Ferengi creation.

DATA

Commander, perhaps it would be best to notify the captain.

ISSACSON

(nodding)

I agree.

INSERT - MAINSCREEN

with a close shot of the vessel.

ISSACSON (OC)

Bridge to Captain Picard...

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING *ENTERPRISE* - MORNING, DAY ONE

in foreground as it approaches VESSEL at sublight and assumes stationary position.

PICARD (VO)

Captain's log: stardate 43165.2. While investigating merchant reports of Ferengi activity, we have encountered an alien vessel of curious design. Apparently lifeless and adrift, I have ordered an Away Team to investigate it further.

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM - MORNING, DAY ONE

PICARD and LA FORGE are near the PLATFORM watching DATA ready to beam over. LA FORGE is wearing an environmental suit and holding the helmet. He is obviously disappointed.

O'BRIEN is at the TRANSPORTER CONSOLE.

RIKER (OC)

Captain, we're in position at 25 kilometers. Sensors still show we're the only two ships in the area, but... (pauses) this reminds me of the Ferengi's STARGAZER trap.

PICARD

Point taken, Number One. Keep me posted. (turns to Data) Now Data, I want you to understand that this is against my better judgment. A one-person Away Team is a contradiction in terms.

DATA

I understand sir, however given the existing environmental conditions, I am best suited for a quick reconnaissance.

LA FORGE

I think you mean "best unsuited", Data.

DATA

Oh, I see. Was that funny? I did not intend it to be so.

PICARD

Data, please. I want you to be extremely cautious and maintain communication. Don't let your curiosity overwhelm your common sense.

DATA

Understood, sir.

DATA mounts the PLATFORM and then turns to face them.

LA FORGE

Good luck, Data. I'll be standing by for your call.

DATA nods again and PICARD turns to O'BRIEN, signaling to energize.

FX - DATA DEMATERIALIZING

INT. VESSEL CONTROL ROOM - MORNING, DAY ONE

showing DATA materializing into a dimly lit, cluttered and cramped version of a bridge. He activates his combadge and begins to take tricorder readings.

DATA

Enterprise, this is Data. I am now scanning the area. Readings indicate: partial pressure of 80% carbon dioxide, 15% nitrogen; atmospheric pressure 350 millibars...temperature -45o Celsius...

DATA isn't affected by the extreme conditions.

INT. BRIDGE - MORNING, DAY ONE

RIKER and Troi at their seats in the COMMAND AREA. WORF at TACTICAL having taken over the day shift.

PICARD enters via the PORT-FORWARD TURBOLIFT, as DATA finishes his recital, and takes his seat.

DATA (OC)

...and I shall attempt to determine the operational status of the power systems.

PICARD

(raises voice for comlink)
Stand by, Mr. La Forge.

LA FORGE (OC)

Aye, sir.

RIKER

Sounds like an old-fashioned, Alaskan winter.

PICARD

But he can work over there unencumbered. On this occasion, being an android is a decided advantage. One could say, an "unsuited" one.

RIKER looks perplexed at this, but TROI smiles, sensing the humor behind PICARD'S comment.

INT. VESSEL - MORNING, DAY ONE

DATA makes his way to the control panels.

DATA

Captain, I believe it is possible to establish normal life support. However, I would like to consult Geordi prior to making the attempt.

INT. BRIDGE - MORNING, DAY ONE

where PICARD, RIKER and TROI are still seated.

PICARD

Stand by, Mr. Data. (then to comlink)
Transporter Room... Mr. La Forge?

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM - MORNING, DAY ONE

as a helmeted LA FORGE mounts PLATFORM.

LA FORGE

I'm on my way, Captain.

INT. VESSEL CONTROL ROOM - MORNING, DAY ONE

FX - LA FORGE MATERIALIZES NEAR DATA.

LA FORGE approaches DATA while checking the readings on his suit's sleeve.

LA FORGE

Data, I see what you mean. It's not very inviting, it is?

DATA

"Inviting"? No, Geordi, but definitely most interesting. Have you noticed how differing technologies are juxtaposed?

LA FORGE

Whoa, Data. You're way ahead of me. First, let's get the life support going.

DATA and LA FORGE start working on the consoles. Lighting increases and the set becomes active as they work.

INT. VESSEL CONTROL ROOM - AFTERNOON, DAY ONE

DATA and LA FORGE look pleased at their success. The set is completely active and LA FORGE has removed his helmet.

INT. READY ROOM - AFTERNOON, DAY ONE

PICARD is seated at his desk when the door chimes.

PICARD

Come.

RIKER, DATA and LA FORGE, still in the suite, enter.

PICARD (CONT'D)

Yes, gentlemen. What do you have to report?

DATA

Captain, Geordi and I discovered some very- I believe the best term is "peculiar" things.

PICARD rises from the desk and goes to the window.

LA FORGE

It appears, sir, that the ship possesses a form of warp drive, but not dependent on dilithium.

PICARD

Peculiar, but not unique. Have you discovered an answer to why this ship is out here?

DATA

Yes, sir. It was sent on an unmanned test voyage, controlled entirely by computer.

LA FORGE

Unfortunately, their warp field design generated a low band radiation which caused the systems to shut down. It's just been drifting.

PICARD returns to his desk.

RIKER

What about its similarity to early Starfleet designs? Coincidence?

DATA

Evidence would appear to support that contention, sir. Further examination revealed a technological discontinuity. It appears as if-

LA FORGE

(interrupting DATA)

Data really noticed it first. Some of the control systems are based on transtators, almost like our own. But then others rely on microchips, sometimes in the same panel.

RIKER

As if their civilization went from covered wagons to aircraft, without any of the intermediate steps...

DATA

(directly to Riker)

I believe a better analogy would be "fission powered spacecraft", Commander. The logical-

PICARD

(interrupting)

Data, please. Have you been able to ascertain the vessel's system of origin?

DATA

After adjusting for drift, there is a high probability that the system of origin lies along a heading of 179, mark 2. I think-

LA FORGE

(breaking in)

Captain, we're not going to abandon it, are we? There are so many unknowns, I'd like the opportunity to study it further.

DATA

I agree with Geordi, Captain.

PICARD

Well, Number One? Do you agree with the consensus. Or do you still believe this to be another Ferengi ruse?

EVERYONE turns expectantly to RIKER.

RIKER

A warp drive without dilithium... I think that's worth a closer look.

PICARD

Agreed. Mr. La Forge, prepare a tractor beam for warp towing. Mr. Data, you have the Conn, set a course of 179, mark 2.

DATA

Yes, sir.

LA FORGE

Aye, sir.

DATA and LA FORGE exit, RIKER remains standing.

RIKER

There was something else, Captain?

PICARD

Yes. Data confirmed a suspicion. Are you acquainted with the "Iotian Ruling"?

RIKER

Vaguely. It concerns cultural interference prior to the Prime Directive, doesn't it?

PICARD

Correct, Number One. Have a look at this.

PICARD reaches for monitor and turns it to Riker.

RIKER

"Federation Bureau of Indigenous Species"? A "hands off" planet?

RIKER sits down to read the report as PICARD gets tea.

PICARD

Earl Grey, it would appear so. (retrieves tea)
I've queried Starfleet for further-

DATA (OC)

Captain, we activated the tractor beam. Course changes have been entered as ordered.

PICARD

(raised voice for comlink)

Make it so, Mr. Data. Warp factor two.

INSERT - *ENTERPRISE* AND VESSEL

jumping to warp speed.

INT. BRIDGE - AFTERNOON, DAY ONE

LA FORGE watches DATA at SCIENCE ONE from the ENGINEERING STATION. Worf is at TACTICAL.

DATA

Computer, compare the vessel currently in tow against Federation starships, past and present.

COMPUTER

State parameters of comparison.

DATA

General design and profile, rather than specific dimension.

COMPUTER

Working.

LA FORGE approaches DATA.

LA FORGE

What's the matter, Data? I know that look...

DATA

I am testing the validity of the Captain's hypothesis. I also neglected to-

COMPUTER

Search completed.

DATA and LA FORGE look up and see the outlines of the VESSEL.

DATA

Intriguing. When displacement is ignored, there is an 81% match to the Horizon class starships.

LA FORGE

Horizon?... Why is that... Computer, display the mission profiles of the *U.S.S. Horizon*.

COMPUTER scrolls the information on the monitor as Worf joins them.

LA FORGE (CONT'D)

Maybe it's nothing, but I've got a funny feeling... (then points to display) There! Coordinates look familiar?

STAR TREK:"The Contract", King - ACT ONE 10.

WORF

It is on our current heading. (reading monitor)
Sigma Iotia II. Initially surveyed by *U.S.S. Horizon*. Then by the *Enterprise*, one hundred years later.

DATA

That ship (nodding towards the mainscreen) is also named "*Enterprise*". The control computers were encoded with the name.

WORF

(eyes widen in interest, then narrow in resolution)
That is something the Captain should know.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING *ENTERPRISE* AND VESSEL - AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY
in warp space.

INT. VESSEL CONTROL ROOM - AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY

LA FORGE moving around supervising a busy inspection team. He approaches a bulkhead with the access panel removed and WESLEY'S legs are sticking out.

LA FORGE

How's it going in there, Wes?

Crashing noises are heard from inside the ACCESS, followed by swearing and thrashing of legs as WESLEY tries to turn around.

WESLEY (O.C.)

Huh?... What? I'm trying to--oops, watch it!

A large circuit board falls out. WESLEY squirms out, landing on the floor, covered with dust and grime as LA FORGE looks on bemused.

LA FORGE

Is that it?

RIKER enters the VESSEL CONTROL ROOM and approaches as WESLEY gets up and tries to dust himself off.

WESLEY

Yes, I think so. At least it's burned out the way you said it should be. I didn't see anything else that fit the description.

LA FORGE

Good job. Take it to the team- I want it analyzed right away.

WESLEY

Yes, sir, right away!

WESLEY runs off excited, but La Forge stops him.

LA FORGE

Oh, and Wes? This isn't a race- we'll figure out how this baby works in good time.

WESLEY nods ruefully and makes a point of keeping a normal pace.

RIKER

So what have you got so far? Is-

GOMEZ interrupts from the back.

GOMEZ

Lt. La Forge! We've got the shielding installed!
Can we start a power up?

LA FORGE

No, not until we have a good understanding how
everything operates first—even if we have to
take it apart piece by piece.

GOMEZ

(dejectedly)
Aye, sir.

GOMEZ returns to work while LA FORGE and RIKER watch.

LA FORGE

(softly to Riker)
I think Wesley's enthusiasm is effecting my
other engineers.

RIKER

Too much of a good thing?

LA FORGE

Ummm, yes sir. Anyway, we've discovered that
this warp drive is fundamentally different from
ours.

RIKER

How? Explain.

LA FORGE

I'm not sure that I can, sir. But it seems that
early in development, their Zephram Cochrane
chose an alternate path for warp theory. Problem
is, I haven't a clue to what that path was.

INSERT - *ENTERPRISE* AND VESSEL IN TOW

as it approaches a planet.

INT. BRIDGE - EVENING, SECOND DAY

PICARD is seated at COMMAND with RIKER and TROI. WORF is at
TACTICAL, DATA is at OPS and an OFFICER is at CONN.

PICARD

Standard approach, Helm.

LA FORGE enters and goes to ENGINEERING STATION.

WORF

Captain. Sensors indicate a Ferengi vessel in
stationary orbit. There are two vessels similar
to the "Little E." nearby.

PICARD

Put it on- (stops and turns to Worf)
"Little E."?

WORF
Mr. La Forge's term, sir.

PICARD
Indeed? (with a half smile) Put it on the
mainviewer, Mr. Worf.

INSERT - MAINSCREEN

showing the planet dissolve to a small image of a Ferengi vessel.
Magnification jumps and two spacecraft similar to vessel become
visible and held in tractor beams.

BACK TO SCENE

PICARD
(turns toward Worf)
Have they scanned us yet, Mr. Worf?

WORF
Not yet, sir. Recommend we go to Yellow Alert.

PICARD
(stands and moves closer to screen)
No, not yet. Let's hear what they have to say.
Hailing frequencies open.

WORF
(pause for hailing frequencies)
Frequencies open, sir.

PICARD
(raises voice for comlink)
Ferengi vessel, this is Captain
Jean-Luc Picard commanding the USS *Enterprise*.
We desire communications, please respond.

WORF
(reads console)
Nothing sir. However, they did receive our
transmission.

RIKER
"Welcome to my parlor"...

PICARD
Possibly, Number One. Or perhaps we're simply
unexpected.

RIKER
And they're scrambling to cover their tracks.

PICARD
Mr. Data, Mr. Worf- I want a complete scan of
the planet and near space. But do keep an eye on
our Ferengi neighbors.

WORF nods in acknowledgement as DATA moves from OPS to SCIENCE ONE.
PICARD sits back down and turns to TROI.

PICARD

Counselor, what do you make of the situation?

TROI

Commander Riker is correct, sir. The Ferengi are definitely concealing something. (pauses, trying to be more precise) I'm sorry, but I can't be more specific than that now.

DATA

Captain, I have completed the scan. There is evidence of damage to the engineering section of the Ferengi vessel. Their warp drive is currently inoperative. The damage was caused by the native spacecraft, which are being held "at bay", sir.

PICARD

(to Riker)

So, their auxiliary systems may be overtaxed as well. Curiouser and curiouser, Number One.

WORF

Captain, we are being scanned from the planet's surface.

DATA

The scan originates in an area of heavy industrialization on the largest continent, Captain. "Curious"... the scan is somewhat inconsistent in nature.

RIKER

How so, Mr. Data?

DATA

The frequencies used range from a subspace carrier to Radio detecting and ranging...most interesting.

LA FORGE

But not unexpected Captain, given the technological mixture we found on the "Little E".

DATA

Correct, Geordi. It is another confirmation of Commander Riker's "Covered Wagon" theory. It seems -

WORF

(interrupting)

Captain, we are now being hailed by the Ferengi vessel. They waited until after we had been scanned from the planet.

PICARD

Open the channel, Mr. Worf.

RAIZADA (OC)

This is Raizada, First Officer to Bab, Daemon of the Ferengi. We are negotiating a trade agreement with the Grand Syndicate and do not require human "assistance".

WORF

(pause for hailing frequencies)
End of transmission, sir.

RIKER

What kind of "trade agreement" would involve being fired upon?

PICARD

A decidedly unfriendly one, I should think. Still, it's time to find out exactly what's going on. (stands and approaches view screen) Mr. Worf, I want a tight-beam subspace channel to the source of the planetary scan.

WORF nods to DATA who transfers the information to TACTICAL.

WORF

Hmmm (looks closer at console), that channel was once used for voice transmissions.

DATA

That is correct. This frequency was once used exclusively for ship-to-shore communications, before combadges were standardized. This is also another confirmation of-

WORF

(interrupting)
Channel ready, sir.

PICARD

(raises voice for comlink)
This is Captain Jean Luc Picard of the *USS Enterprise* for the United Federation of Planets. We are currently in orbit about your planet and request communications. Please respond.

A garbled response from a bad transmission is heard.

VICTORIA (OC)

Hello, *Enterprise*? Is this really the *Enterprise*? Where's Kirk? (pauses for background noise) My grandfather says he doesn't know any Picard. I'm sorry, but he's rather eccentric.

WORF and LA FORGE exchange knowing looks to request for "Kirk".

VICTORIA (CONT'D, OC)

(pause for a muffled, gruff male voice)
Well you are grandfather. And they say they are the *Enterprise*... maybe he retired-?

PICARD

(interjecting on comlink)
I'm sorry, but there is no "Kirk" here. Miss...?
Are you still there, Miss...?

VICTORIA (OC)

Angrath, Victoria Angrath. Just a moment,
Captain Picard. (pauses for discussion)

PICARD starts pacing impatiently as RIKER and TROI look on.

VICTORIA (OC CONT'D)

Very well, Captain. But my grandfather insists
on dealing with you directly. He's used to
dealing with the top man, not a flunky. When can
we expect you?

PICARD

May we discuss this a moment, Miss Angrath?

VICTORIA (OC)

Oh, of course, Captain. We'll stand by.

PICARD gestures to WORF, who closes channel.

PICARD

Reactions, anyone? Number One?

RIKER

(stands up to face Picard, looking concerned)
Reactions? I think it's highly unusual that
they insist on dealing with you in person.

WORF

Agreed. It also seems they know about
transporters.

PICARD

(pauses to consider, then turns to Troi)
Counselor? Your thoughts?

TROI

(stands up also)
I sense no deception on the part of Miss
Angrath, Captain. She is sincere as well as
concerned with our... (searches for right word)
"validity", however.

PICARD

(reaching a decision)
Number One, you have the Conn. I don't see any
alternative to get to the bottom of this.

PICARD gestures to WORF to reopen channel.

PICARD (CONT'D)

Miss Angrath? My associates and I would be
pleased to meet with you and your grandfather.

STAR TREK:"The Contract", King - ACT TWO 17.

VICTORIA (OC)

Excellent, Captain. I will transmit the location coordinates. Is meeting after lunch alright?

RIKER and PICARD see ISSACSON, CLARKE and the rest of the night shift enter from the AFT-TURBOLIFTS.

ISSACSON looks surprised to see the prime crew still on as she approaches the COMMAND AREA.

PICARD

Yes, Miss Angrath, (exchanges an amused glance with Riker) after "lunch" will be fine. Worf, Data, Counselor, and- (turning to Issacson) Cmdr. Issacson, it's time to get some answers.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - PLANET'S AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY

showing an industrial setting which mixes high tech with low tech, just like the vessel.

FX - PICARD, WORF, DATA, TROI AND ISSACSON MATERIALIZE

DATA immediately begins to take tricorder readings while everyone else looks around. Several automobiles go by, taking no notice on them.

DATA

Captain, there are high concentrations of unburned hydrocarbons in the atmosphere. Prolonged exposure can result in-

PICARD

(with distaste)

The word is "smog", Data . We will not be here that long.

DATA

Yes, sir, I will not be effected regardless. I was going to comment the electrical power appears to be generated by nuclear fusion, instead of by burning fossil fuels. It is another example of Cmdr. Riker's-

ISSACSON

(interrupting)

How did these people develop-

WORF

(interrupting)

Captain!

WORF gestures with his drawn phaser to a vehicle that is slowing in front of them. PICARD steps forward, much to WORF'S dislike. The DRIVER emerges.

DRIVER

Are you Captain Picard? Of the *Enterprise*?

PICARD

Yes, I am Captain Picard. Do you represent a Mr. Angrath?

DRIVER

(nods and gestures to the vehicle)

If you please, sir.

The AWAY TEAM gets in. Just as vehicle pulls away, VICTORIA approaches from opposite direction.

She pulls out an old style communicator and activates it.

VICTORIA

Damn! I missed them, Grandfather. The Syndicate got here first. I'll follow them.

VICTORIA goes to the street and flags down a taxi.

INT. SYNDICATE HALL LOBBY - PLANET'S AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY

where the DRIVER ushers the AWAY TEAM through an ornate lobby of a large, old-fashioned meeting hall. The GUARD to the entrance of the hall stops the group.

GUARD

Sorry, dames ain't allowed. They'll have'ta wait there.

GUARD points to a WAITING AREA in the corner of the lobby. ISSACSON starts to protest, but TROI stops her. PICARD nods that it is okay and subtly gestures to his combadge—they can call for help if needed. TROI and ISSACSON go over to the sitting area.

The GUARD steps aside to allow others to pass as the DRIVER departs. PICARD, DATA and WORF enter through the double doors.

INT. SYNDICATE HALL - PLANET'S AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY

showing a large table dominating the room as they enter. Two groups are already seated around the table; the SYNDICATE OPPOSITION and his aides and DAEMON BAB'S landing party. The FERENGI are being studiously ignored and are not pleased about it. They looked dwarfed and insignificant in the highback chairs.

An AIDE ushers PICARD'S party toward seats near the head of the table. The Ferengi immediately jump up, weapons drawn. Simultaneously, the double doors at the other end of the room open with a recorded fanfare of trumpets, and all the Iotians stand.

Confused, the FERENGI lower their weapons, as the CHAIRMAN enters.

CHAIRMAN

Ahhh, I see our other guests have arrived. Now we can get started.

DAEMON BAB

(hotly to Opposition)

You're not in charge here? And you've kept us waiting for humans? (notices Worf) And their pet?

WORF growls, PICARD motions for him to back down.

OPPOSITION

How dare you insult members of the Syndicate! (stands) You're lucky our fleet didn't blow you to bits when you first arrived!

CHAIRMAN

Gentlemen, gentlemen! Please let us have order.

PICARD

(aside to DATA)

Data, do you understand any of this?

DATA

Yes, sir. I believe it is an adaptation of the classical rules of order for a formal meeting.

PICARD

But who are...? I see... (smiles knowingly).
Mr. Chairman, a question if I may?

CHAIRMAN

(pleased)

The Chair recognizes Captain Picard of the Federation.

OPPOSITION sits down, but the FERENGI remain standing. Irritated, the CHAIRMAN motions for them to sit and they grudgingly oblige.

PICARD

We were invited here by a Miss Angrath representing her grandfather. Is he here? We would like to meet him.

CHAIRMAN

(embarrassed)

Ahhh, yes, Captain. Well that is a little hard to explain.

PICARD

Please do explain. Obviously, none of you are Miss Angrath.

CHAIRMAN

Well, Captain, we've taken the liberty of intercepting you. The Great One shouldn't be taking his valuable time...(self assured again) having to deal with such matters.

OPPOSITION

(sees an opening and quickly interjects)

Here, here. I agree! The Great One shouldn't be bothered. In the meantime...

PICARD sighs in frustration at having "lost the floor". Discussion continues between CHAIRMAN and OPPOSITION.

DATA

Captain, I think they are what you would call "bureaucrats".

INT. WAITING AREA - PLANET'S AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY

TROI is seated, watching ISSACSON pace the floor in aggravation.

ISSACSON

Well, what do we do now, Counselor?

TROI

Anna, we can not change the attitude of this society towards women, regardless of our own beliefs. We can only alter how we react to such discrimination.

ISSACSON

(stops to face Troi with wry humor)
That's going to take some work, Counselor. I'm not use to-

VICTORIA enters and goes goes right to them, ignoring the GUARD.

VICTORIA

There you are! Finally! (hesitates, then) You are from the *Enterprise*, aren't you?

TROI

Yes, Miss Angrath? We have been "separated" from the rest of our party (indicates closed doors).

VICTORIA

I figured as much, but I can take you to meet my grandfather, if you'd like.

ISSACSON

(relieved to finally do something)
Yes! That's what we came for. Just let me check in first. (taps combadge)

INT. BRIDGE - SHIP'S NIGHT, SECOND DAY

showing RIKER in the CAPTAIN'S CHAIR and CLARKE is at TACTICAL.

The mainscreen still shows the FERENGI VESSEL and two Iotian SPACECRAFT in tractor beams.

RIKER

Mr. Clarke, how are our neighbors doing?

CLARKE

Just sitting there, Commander. But the Ferengi tractor beams have weakened by 11% in the last hour.

RIKER

(stands and approaches screen)
Let's see if they're ready to talk straight. Hailing frequencies, Mr. Clarke. (raise voice for comlink) Ferengi vessel, this is William Riker, First Officer of the *Enterprise*.

INSERT - MAINSCREEN

as it dissolves to show RAIZADA.

RAIZADA

What do you want, First Officer Riker? I have no time for idle conversation.

BACK TO SCENE

RIKER

Nor do I. I think it's time you admit you've got a problem. I think we could be of assistance.

RAIZADA

What are you mean, human? There is no problem I do not have under control.

RIKER

Alright. But what if I offered to take the two Iotian spacecraft into our tractor beams, in return for your guarantee not to take any offensive action?

RAIZADA

(quickly taking the bargain)
Agreed, First Officer Riker... (decides to push a little) but only if you make the same guarantee regarding the safety of this vessel.

RIKER

I can only speak for the *Enterprise*. I'll have to contact the Iotian commanders.

RAIZADA

Then I will await further communication.

INSERT - MAINSCREEN

as RAIZADA dissolves back to the original scene.

BACK TO SCENE

CLARKE

For someone whose ship is in trouble, he sure is pressing his luck, isn't he Commander?

RIKER

That's the Ferengi. Even when they've got everything to lose they still try for a better deal. Well, open a channel to the Iotian spacecraft...

INT. LABORATORY - PLANET'S AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY

showing a crowded workplace with breadboarded apparatus, assorted computers and other equipment. There is a long table in the middle of the room with higher tech, Federation style equipment.

TROI and ISSACSON enter with VICTORIA, who approaches an elderly man, ANGRATH, is seated in a wheelchair. An oxygen tank and mask are nearby. His back is to them, while he works at a computer.

VICTORIA

Grandfather?

ANGRATH glances up. TROI and ISSACSON hang back until presented.

VICTORIA

This is Counselor Deanna Troi and Lt. Commander Anna Issacson of the *Enterprise*... my grandfather, Travis Angrath.

ISSACSON

(comes up and extends hand)
Sir, on behalf of Captain Picard, may I say it's a pleasure to meet you.

TROI has stayed back sensing mixed emotions from ANGRATH. ANGRATH ignores the outstretched hand, and slowly rises from wheelchair.

ANGRATH

Vicky, where's this Captain Picard?

VICTORIA

I'm sorry, Grandfather, but the Syndicate got to them first. But guess what? They found our *Enterprise* and brought it back with them.

ANGRATH

(with breathing difficulty)
That no longer... matters. The project was... a failure.

Exhausted, ANGRATH falls heavily back in the wheelchair and takes a whiff of the oxygen.

VICTORIA

No, Grandfather, it wasn't. I just have to get up there and take a look. I'm sure-

ANGRATH

First things, first. (looks expectantly) If you are from the Federation, have you come to honor the contract?

TROI and ISSACSON exchange questioning glances.

INT. SYNDICATE HALL - PLANET'S AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY

PICARD is seated one chair away from OPPOSITION, frustrated with the evasive proceedings. DATA and WORF are seated next to him.

CHAIRMAN

...And what have you to say regarding our action against your enemies, these Ferengi?

PICARD

Why do you think the Ferengi are our enemies?

OPPOSITION

(pompously)
Why, he (indicating Daemon Bab) as much as said so! Then our glorious spacefleet struck a blow in the name of our allies, the Federation.

DAEMON BAB

(standing, outraged)

Your attacked us because of an alliance with the humans?!

The FERENGI draw their weapons and come up behind DAEMON. WORF and DATA stand in response, drawing their phasers.

PICARD

(loudly, in best diplomatic voice)

Gentlemen, gentlemen. We all seem to be the victims of misunderstanding. May we discuss this rationally?

INT. LABORATORY - PLANET'S LATE AFTERNOON, SECOND DAY

ISSACSON and VICTORIA are at a side table, talking. TROI is with a seated ANGRATH at the center table. He has warmed somewhat to their presence.

TROI

You are responsible for the development of all this technology, Mr. Angrath?

ANGRATH

(brightens a bit)

Perhaps I served as the inspiration. You must remember, I've had help, Counselor Troi (gestures to Victoria). But most of my life has been devoted to space exploration, and the industry necessary to support it... almost seventy years, now.

TROI

That is an outstanding achievement, Mr. Angrath. You should be quite proud.

TROI is perplexed that she senses he is not.

ANGRATH

(weakly, with bitter humor)

What good does it do me now?

INT. BRIDGE - SHIP'S NIGHT, SECOND DAY

RIKER is standing in COMMAND AREA. CLARKE is still at TACTICAL.

RAIZADA is on the MAINSCREEN.

RIKER

The cease fire has been agreed to. Disengage your tractor beams.

RAIZADA

(gestures to someone)

It is done, Riker. The Ferengi always keep their bargains.

RIKER shakes his head in disbelief as the transmission ends.

INT. LABORATORY - PLANET'S LATE AFTERNOON - SECOND DAY

TROI and ANGRATH are still at the table.

ANGRATH

Would you care to see my inspiration, Counselor?
I rarely have occasion to show it anymore.

ANGRATH rises from wheelchair, waving off TROI'S offer of assistance. He shuffles to the end of the table and opens a concealed drawer. He removes an object and shows it to TROI.

TROI

That is quite amazing, Mr. Angrath.

ANGRATH proudly hands her an early Federation communicator.

ANGRATH

This was my piece of the action.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

ESTABLISHING *ENTERPRISE* - SHIP'S NIGHT, SECOND DAY

in orbit with other vessels.

RIKER (VO)

Ship's log- First Officer reporting. To conserve power, we have released the "Little E" to its own orbit. While the *Enterprise* plays mother hen to the Iotian spacefleet, the Captain's away team remains on the surface of the planet, hopefully solving all the mysteries.

INT. SYNDICATE HALL - PLANET'S EVENING, SECOND DAY

where the formal meeting is over and PICARD and DATA are talking with the OPPOSITION off to the side by a bar.

The FERENGI are off to the other side, keeping to themselves. WORF is a position where he can see all.

OPPOSITION

(addressing Data)

... and our great Spacefleet was the ultimate result. We owe it all to the Great One. Without him, it would have been impossible.

The OTHER IOTIANS around nod in awed agreement.

PICARD

This "Great One" you refer to, is he Mr. Angrath?

OPPOSITION

Certainly, Captain! One and the same!

DATA

And he is responsible for the vessel the *Enterprise* encountered?

OPPOSITION

One man alone? Even the Great One is not that enterprising, Mr. Data.

The IOTIANS share a laugh at DATA's expense. DATA looks perplexed, missing out on another joke.

OPPOSITION

But you could say he was the driving force in our effort.

More scattered laughter as the OPPOSITION moves towards the bar.

DATA

"Driving"? A curious reference, sir. Do you believe it is a coincidence, Captain?

PICARD

(with a heavy sigh)
Data, this situation is long passed the point of
being attributable to coincidence.

INT. ENGINEERING - SHIP'S NIGHT, SECOND DAY

LA FORGE is working at one of the consoles. He is interrupted by
GOMEZ from another bay area.

GOMEZ

(shouts across intervening space)
Lt. La Forge!?

LA FORGE gives a "why me?" look, then gets up and walks over.

LA FORGE

What is it, Ensign? Shouldn't you be off duty?

GOMEZ

What? Not with all this going on!

LA FORGE

(shakes head, giving in)
Okay, let me have it. What laws of physics have
you broken this time?

INT. LABORATORY- EVENING, SECOND DAY

TROI and ISSACSON are in communication with PICARD and DATA.
VICTORIA and ANGRATH are off to the side.

ISSACSON

All of this (sweep of hand) because a
communicator was lost here some seventy-odd
years ago?

DATA (OC)

Seventy-one point two years, Commander.

PICARD (OC)

Let's not overlook the Iotian initiative. They
have made phenomenal progress during those few
years. Your Mr. Angrath, or the "Great One" as
he has been referred to here, has been
instrumental in it.

TROI

That is true, Captain, however... (with
uncertainty) he is not satisfied with it. I
sense a deep frustration with the recent
developments. Or perhaps... "disappointed" would
be a better approximation.

INT. SYNDICATE HALL- PLANET'S EVENING, SECOND DAY

PICARD and DATA are standing off to the side with WORF close by.

PICARD

Disappointed? In what manner?

TROI (OC)

I'm not certain, Captain. At being excluded? It could be his advanced age and physical condition. He is not in good health, sir.

PICARD

Counselor, I shall attempt to arrange a meeting with Mr. Angrath through the Syndicate Council. Failing that, it may be necessary to use the transporter to force a meeting.

TROI (OC)

Is that a desirable option, Captain? I can hear the frustration in your voice.

PICARD

"Frustration" doesn't begin to due it justice, Counselor. Their bureaucratic system is incomprehensible. But, yes, it is desirable. Picard, out.

INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE- SHIP'S NIGHT, SECOND DAY

RIKER is relaxed in the command chair. CLARKE is still at TACTICAL.

CLARKE

Commander! I read a power up on the "Little E"!

RIKER

(straightening up)

Are any of our people still aboard her, Mr. Clarke?

CLARKE

(consults sensors and responds looking up)
Yes, sir. I show a total of six people arranged in the Control Room and Engineering.

RIKER

(raise voice to comlink)
Riker to La Forge...

INT. ENGINEERING - SHIP'S NIGHT, SECOND DAY

LA FORGE is back working at console.

LA FORGE

La Forge, here.

RIKER (OC)

Have you authorized powering up the "Little E"?

LA FORGE

No, sir! In fact, I specifically denied permission to try under the circumstances.

LA FORGE gets up and looks back at bay area, sees that it is empty.

LA FORGE (CONT'D)

Oh, no... Can I get back to you, Commander?

INTERCUT:

RIKER

Make it quick, Lieutenant. (stands up) We might have trouble. I don't think patience is a Ferengi virtue.

CLARKE

Commander, the Ferengi are hailing us.

RIKER

Right on time. (gesture positively to Clarke)

RAIZADA (OC)

(pause for hailing frequencies)

First Officer Riker, you have violated our agreement. Unless this activity ceases immediately, we will have no option but to take defensive measures.

RIKER

Wait a minute. We're not sure who is responsible- (pause for hailing frequencies)

CLARKE

Channel closed, sir. Sensors show the Ferengi are beginning their own start up. (pause to scan console, then with alarm) Weapons systems activating as well, sir.

RIKER

Damn. Well, this is another fine mess...

INT. ENGINEERING- SHIP'S NIGHT, SECOND DAY

LA FORGE is frantically making a check of the duty roster. WESLEY enters and goes up to him.

WESLEY

Hi, Geordi, what's next?

LA FORGE

Damn! Did she go off duty or not? (looks up to WESLEY) Wes, have you seen Ensign Gomez?

WESLEY

(shakes head, thinking, then remembers)

Isn't she with the engineering team, sir? I passed them all coming in, something about going back to the "Little E".

LA FORGE

You're right. I gave her permission a little while ago. That's what I was afraid of.

WESLEY

Geordi, what's going on?

LA FORGE

Plenty. Computer, open a channel to the "Little E". La Forge to Ensign-

GOMEZ (OC)

(hastily interrupts)

Sir! The systems just came on, sir. We were just studying the drive linkages, when suddenly they just came on!

LA FORGE

Are you sure no one there did anything?

GOMEZ (OC)

Yes, sir! Positive!

LA FORGE

(recognizing the truth)

Okay, easy Ensign, settle down. I want you to check the computer control.

RIKER (OC)

Mr. La Forge, do you have anything for me?

GOMEZ (OC)

Right away, sir.

LA FORGE

We're working on it, Commander.

GOMEZ (OC)

You're right, Lieutenant. The control system's receiving a ground based transmission.

LA FORGE

Good work, Ensign. (then to Riker over comlink)
Did you copy that, Commander.

RIKER (OC)

Acknowledged, Lieutenant. The Ferengi are becoming excited, so keep me posted.

LA FORGE

From a cold start, we should have at least twenty minutes before they have anything more threatening than maneuvering thrusters.

INT. SYNDICATE HALL- PLANET'S EVENING, SECOND DAY

RIKER is reporting to PICARD while DATA scans the area.

RIKER (OC)

...and we estimate the Ferengi will have full power in twenty minutes, Captain.

DATA

(stops in one direction)
Captain, I have a bearing on the transmission.
It is in the location of Counselor Troi and
Commander Issacson.

PICARD

(to comlink)
Did you catch that, Number One? I think it's
time for my meeting with our mysterious Mr.
Angrath.

RIKER (OC)

Yes, sir. I'll alert the transporter room.

PICARD

Good, Number One, beam us-

PICARD is interrupted by the DAEMON BAB, who approaches with the
other FERENGI, quite agitated. CHAIRMAN and OPPOSITION are close
behind interested in the proceedings.

DAEMON BAB

Captain Picard, you mean to attack us with your
captured vessel! (an accusation, not a question)

PICARD looks at him with sheer frustration. WORF has moved in
closer with a hand on his phaser.

PICARD is about to respond but is interrupted by O'BRIEN.

O'BRIEN (OC)

I'm locked on the coordinates, Captain.

PICARD

Transport everyone in my vicinity.

O'BRIEN (OC)

Energizing...

FX - PICARD, DATA, WORF, CHAIRMAN, OPPOSITION, DAEMON BAB, AND
FERENGI- DEMATERIALIZING.

INT. LABORATORY- PLANET'S EVENING, SECOND DAY

FX - THE ENTIRE GROUP MATERIALIZES

in view of TROI, ISSACSON while ANGRATH who suffers a seizure. TROI
and ISSACSON immediately go to his aid.

The IOTIANS are dazed by the transporter effect, but the he FERENGI
are enraged that they have been forced along.

PICARD

Counselor?

TROI

Sir, this is Mr Angrath, but he needs medical
assistance immediately.

PICARD

(activates combadge)

Transporter room, medical emergency. Stand by to beam up parties at my immediate location. (then to Data and Issacson) You two locate the source of the transmissions to the "Little E" and do your best to halt them.

DATA and ISSACSON nod and move off as TROI does her best to give ANGRATH first aid.

WORF

Captain, what about them? (indicating Ferengi and Iotians)

PICARD

I think we'll be safer all around if they accompany us, don't you, Lieutenant? (then to comlink) Transporter room, energize Mr. O'Brien.

FX - EVERYONE IN THE LAB DEMATERIALIZES

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. HALL WAY-EVENING, SECOND DAY

showing DATA and ISSACSON stop in front of a closed door.

DATA

(turning tricorder off)

The transmission originates from this location.

DATA tries the door and it opens easily into a room just like the lab. They see VICTORIA seated at a terminal, engrossed in work.

VICTORIA

(to self)

So, that's what happened. I'll fix you up, baby.
We'll show them...

ISSACSON

Vicky?

ISSACSON goes up to VICTORIA and puts a hand on her shoulder.
VICTORIA gasps, startled at the intrusion.

ISSACSON (CONT'D)

Sorry, but I'm afraid your grandfather is seriously ill. Oh, and this is Commander Data.

VICTORIA

(jumping up alarmed, ignoring him)

My grandfather?! Where is he?!

ISSACSON

He's on our Enterprise.

VICTORIA

Please take me to him! You must help him, he's the only family I've got!

DATA

Miss Angrath, are you aware that in reactivating the "Little E", you are risking further conflict with the Ferengi? You must deactivate the control systems immediately.

ISSACSON

Commander!

VICTORIA

(interjecting desperately)

I can't, it's on automatic now. Please-

DATA

(not to be swayed from orders)

Is it possible to abort the process from aboard your vessel?

VICTORIA nods, about to plead again, but DATA continues.

DATA (CONT'D)

(activates combadge)

Lieutenant Commander Data to *Enterprise*. Three to beam up.

INT. SICKBAY - SHIP'S LATE NIGHT, SECOND DAY

PULASKI is examining ANGRATH who is stretched out on an exam bed. PICARD AND TROI watch in the background.

RIKER (OC)

Captain, the Ferengi now claim that we've taken their Daemon hostage.

PICARD

(to comlink)

Oh, "hostage" is much too harsh a word, Number One. Inform them that the Daemon is our "guest" and may return to his ship whenever he desires.

RIKER (OC)

I'll pass that along, Captain.

DATA, ISSACSON, and VICTORIA enter. VICTORIA approaches ANGRATH as PULASKI steps aside.

PICARD

What's his condition, Doctor?

PULASKI

He has suffered a stroke, Captain, for which I've administered a corrective. There is advanced old age and the lungs have deteriorated from prolonged exposure to a toxic substance. Asbestos, I believe.

PICARD

(to Pulaski only in a low voice)

Doctor, administering emergency first aid is one thing. But we must refrain from using "extraordinary means".

PULASKI

Understood, sir. It would require complete reconstruction of the lungs...

VICTORIA

(approaching)

He's dying, isn't he? Please, tell me the truth.

PULASKI

He may recover his strength for a time, but yes, he is. The best I can do is make him more comfortable in the time remaining.

ANGRATH

(weakly)

Where am I? Vicky? Vicky, where are we?

PULASKI

I'm Dr. Pulaski. You're aboard the *Enterprise*.

ANGRATH

In space? (tries to rise up, but falls back weak but happy) Made it... finally, finally made it!

VICTORIA nods with tears and takes his hand.

PULASKI

(admiring his courage)
Would you like to return home?

ANGRATH

(weakly)
No! No, please let me stay. Vicky, don't let them send me back! I'm here now-

PULASKI administers a sedative and ANGRATH visibly relaxes breathing easier.

PICARD

(to Troi)
Counselor, do you know what that was about?

TROI

(sadly, reacting to the sense of pain)
Yes, sir, he is afraid. Captain, he is afraid that his deepest wish won't be granted.

VICTORIA

(going directly up to Picard)
Captain Picard, I'll help you deactivate my *Enterprise*, but only if my grandfather is allowed to remain here. Is it a contract?

PICARD

(thinks a moment, then nods)
Agreed. Dr. Pulaski will take care of your grandfather.

PULASKI looks up questioningly at PICARD.

PICARD (CONT'D)

Doctor, perhaps with their emerging technology any such medical interventions given may not be considered "extraordinary" after all?

Pleased PULASKI nods in agreement, then starts preparations for surgery.

PICARD (CONT'D)

(to Victoria)
But now we need assistance with your *Enterprise*... Mr. Data?

INSERT - ALL VESSELS IN ORBIT.

the Ferengi vessel moves into an offensive position.

INT. BRIDGE - SHIP'S LATE NIGHT, SECOND DAY

showing PICARD in the command chair with RIKER next to him.
ISSACSON is at OPS and CLARKE is at TACTICAL.

The FERENGI VESSEL is on the MAINSCREEN.

RIKER

The Ferengi have got a clean shot at us, if they want it.

PICARD

But as long as the Daemon is ensconced here they shouldn't be too quick to fire on us. (then to comlink) Bridge to Lt. Worf?

INT. TEN FORWARD - SHIP'S LATE NIGHT, SECOND DAY

Where the IOTIANS and FERENGI are at a table enjoying drinks. WORF is hovering nearby.

DAEMON BAB

...and we can make it available to you for a reasonable price...

WORF

(moves to wall comlink)

Worf, here.

PICARD (OC)

How are our guests, Lieutenant?

WORF

Behaving themselves, sir. I believe the Ferengi commander has resumed negotiations with the Syndicate.

RIKER (OC)

Well, that explains their complacency.

WORF

Shall I prevent further contact, sir?

PICARD (OC)

Oh no, Mr. Worf. Far be it for us to inhibit free trade. I think the Syndicate is quite capable of guarding it's own interests.

INT. VESSEL CONTROL ROOM - LATE NIGHT, SECOND DAY

VICTORIA is sitting at a console entering commands while DATA and GOMEZ watch. She then sits back as consoles shut down.

VICTORIA

That should do it, Mr. Data.

VICTORIA stands and GOMEZ stays by her side.

DATA

Thank you, Miss Angrath. (taps combadge) Data to *Enterprise*. The "Little E." is now a "dead duck" (seriously employing an idiom)...

GOMEZ takes VICTORIA'S arm and starts off.

GOMEZ

Now, Miss Angrath, I've a few questions, if I may? About the drive system...

INT. BRIDGE - SHIP'S EARLY MORNING, THIRD DAY

with the same set up as before.

CLARKE

Captain, the Ferengi have deactivated their weapons system. They wish to know when to expect their Daemon back.

PICARD stands up.

PICARD

Thank you, Mr. Clarke, tell them very shortly. (turns to Riker) Well, Number One, it is time I introduced you to our esteemed guests. Cmdr. Issacson, you have the Conn.

RIKER and PICARD head for the PORT FORWARD TURBOLIFTS as ISSACSON gets up.

PICARD (CONT'D)

(to Riker)

I think you will find these "bureaucrats" most interesting...

ISSACSON waits until the TURBOLIFT doors close. Then she dashes to the CAPTAIN'S CHAIR and settles in.

ISSACSON

Ensign Anderson? Coffee, please.

INT. TEN FORWARD - EARLY MORNING, THIRD DAY

PICARD and RIKER enter. WOLF is still watch-dogging the IOTIANS and FERENGI, who are engrossed in negotiations and drinking.

ANGRATH, breathing easier, is sitting with TROI and PULASKI at a neighboring table right next to the viewport. PICARD and RIKER approach them.

PICARD

(to passing waiter)

My tea and coffee for Mr. Riker. (then to table) Mr. Angrath, allow me to formally welcome you aboard the *Enterprise*. May I present my First Officer, Cmdr. William Riker.

ANGRATH

A wonderful, wonderful ship you have, Captain.
Larger then even my wildest dreams!

VICTORIA and DATA enter and approach the group while PICARD and RIKER take their cups.

ANGRATH (CONT'D)

Ahh, Vicky! Please come and sit with a happy old man!

PICARD and RIKER step aside for VICTORIA to pass. Then RIKER pulls a chair out for her and grabs one for himself.

DATA stays back as PICARD steps across him to face other table.

PICARD

Daemon Bab, it seems we have some unfinished business.

The talking stops as they all turn to PICARD. The IOTIANS are beaming, happily intoxicated. The FERENGI instantly sober up.

CHAIRMAN

Ahh, Captain Picard, Very, very impressive (with sweep of hand).

DAEMON BAB

Yes, Picard! I suggest your captured vessel would be appropriate compensation for the damages we suffered at the hands of your allies.

PICARD

Your compensation has been the opportunity to effect repairs on your ship unhindered, and enjoy our hospitality while aboard. You seem to have made good use of the time provided.

DAEMON BAB

(knowing bluff has been called)

What can I expect from a race which allows its females in positions of command? At least these... (motioning toward Iotians) Iotians are more reasonable in their attitudes.

VICTORIA

(up to Data, jokingly)

Are they always that obnoxious? How do they ever reproduce?

DATA

(seriously answering)

Ferengi mating rituals are most interesting. First, the female...

DATA is interrupted by DAEMON BAB and FERENGI jumping up, reaching for weapons. They realize they've been taken and drop hands in frustration.

DAEMON BAB

I will not remain here and be insulted by a female! This is not hospitality!

The FERENGI activate a device on their belts and dematerialize.

WORF

I was wondering when they were going to leave.
(to passing waiter) I will have my morning
beverage.

ISSACSON (OC)

Bridge to Captain Picard.

PICARD

(puts cup down and goes to wall comlink)
Yes, Commander?

ISSACSON (OC)

The Ferengi are leaving orbit, sir.

PICARD

Understood. (rejoins party, saying to Riker)
Well, Number One, that is, as they say, that.

VICTORIA

Now, Grandfather, don't you have a confession to
make?

ANGRATH

Yes (sighs). It's about our *Enterprise*.

CHAIRMAN

(becoming concerned)
Yes, Great One, what about it? It is your
masterpiece! So graciously returned...

VICTORIA

(standing with controlled anger)
That's just it! It's not his ship, I designed
most of it.

CHAIRMAN and OPPOSITION look absolutely shocked.

CHAIRMAN

(to Angrath only, outraged)
As Chairman of the Syndicate, how could you have
deceived me?

ANGRATH

It is true. We felt you wouldn't give her the
respect her work was due. In fact, you wouldn't
have accepted it at all.

VICTORIA

But these people have shown us women can
contribute to our society too. And we're
(indicating Angrath) not going to hide it any
longer.

CHAIRMAN and OPPOSITION stand up.

OPPOSITION

I protest! This can't be!

CHAIRMAN

Totally unacceptable!

VICTORIA

Why?! Why?! It works for them!

ANGRATH

(addressing Picard, but for others)
Captain, perhaps you weren't aware that as
Federation representative, you are entitled to
collect your cut and select a new Chairman?

A stunned silence quickly descends.

CHAIRMAN

(almost meekly)
Ahh, Captain Picard, let's not be hasty here.
Since we had no idea advance have you come to
collect your "cut"? I'm afraid-

PICARD

I beg your pardon? Please, Miss Angrath,
gentlemen. It appears we have much to discuss. I
call this "meeting" to order...

INSERT - *ENTERPRISE* AND IOTIAN SPACECRAFT

no longer in tractor beams.

INT. TEN FORWARD - SEVERAL HOURS LATER

PICARD, RIKER and TROI are seated at a table.

PULASKI enters as the IOTIANS are being ushered out by WORF.
ANGRATH stops the procession, extends his hand to her and they
shake.

ANGRATH

Thank you again, Doctor, for giving an old man a
"few" more years.

PULASKI

My pleasure. But as I said before, take care of
yourself properly and you might out live us all.

The IOTIAN procession leaves as PULASKI sits at the table.

RIKER

I've only just realized- we've done it to them
again.

PICARD

Hmm, interfered you mean. Yes, this time we gave
them equality and advanced medical technology.

STAR TREK:"The Contract", King - ACT FIVE 41.

PULASKI

What will happen this time?

PICARD

I've contacted Starbase 43. They are dispatching a diplomatic team.

RIKER

So, now the Federation is going to have to live up to our end of the contract.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FIVE

THE END