STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

"Qpid"

CAST

PICARD Q

RIKER VASH

DATA SIR GUY GISBOURNE

BEVERLY Maid Marian’s Servant

TROI Stage Manager

GEORDI Director

WORF Sir Guy’s Page

Non-Speaking

VARIOUS ARCHEOLOGY

COUNCIL MEMBERS

COMPUTER VOICE

TROOP OF MEN-AT-ARMS

EXECUTIONER

CASTLE GUARDS

SERVANTS

MEMBERS OF THE COURT

PRE SHOW: Fifteen minutes before showtime, Actors will be onstage as if it is backstage. Getting ready. Maybe some mirrors and tables. Some might be doing weird vocal or physical exercises. Actors will be free to ad lib what they want until show time. But don’t worry, just do what you need to do to be ready.

SHOW TIME:

STAGE MANAGER

Ten minutes, everyone.

EVERYONE

Thank you, Ten

STAGE MANAGER

Hey, double check your props and make sure they are set and DON’T TOUCH PROPS THAT AREN’T YOURS! (SM keeps doing pre-show checks. Director enters speaks to SM about whatever quietly)

Actors starting doing weird warm ups

TOPEKA TOPEKA BODEGA

STAGE MANAGER

Joanie isn’t here! We start in ten minutes.

DIRECTOR

Uh, did you call her?

STAGE MANAGER

Oh right (phone)

DIRECTOR

Get her here now!

Okay, ready everyone? This is an important day! The Trek Players first show at the Eugene Comic Con! How are you guys doing?

ACTORS (ad lib)

Okay. Nervous. Woo Hoo! Etc

DIRECTOR

Don’t be nervous. I’ve done a great job with this show and you all have done my work justice. I think you will find that I have more than adequately prepared you for our opening night.

(Actors kind of look confused at each other… roll eyes etc… Joanie enters with HEDGEHOG and says something funny about sick hedgehog or something)

JOANIE

Sorry I’m late everyone! My hedgehog was sick!

DIRECTOR

Get into costume, Joanie! And uh… Stage Manager, do something with this hedgehog! (Hands hedgehog to Stage Manager who looks like “What the F do I do with, exits etc..)

DIRECTOR

Okay, everyone Places!

ACTORS

Thanks you places

(The All line up with backs to the audience, facing the black curtain. We hear the directors voice)

DIRECTOR

Hello audience! I am the DIRECTOR of Trek Players. We’d like to thank you for having us here. Tonight the actors will be performing my production of the classic *Star Trek:The Next Generation* episode of *Qpid*. You know, money doesn’t grow on trees and we don’t charge admission, so if you enjoy the show, please put whatever money you can give in our donations jar. We are totally run by your donations, volunteers, and my brilliance. Please like us on Facebook and check out Eugenetrektheatre.com and be sure to tell your friends and family about us. Now please welcome to the stage TREK PLAYERS!

THEME MUSIC Actors exit through curtains, but come back around out the sides to form the famous line and then saying “SPACE THE FINAL FRONTIER”

ACT ONE SCENE ONE

PICARD (V.O.)

Captain's Log, stardate 44741.9.

We have arrived at Tagus Three

where the Enterprise is to serve

as host of the Federation

Archeology Council's annual

symposium.

PICARD, intensely studying his monitor screen.

PICARD (V.O.)

I look forward to giving

tomorrow's keynote address with

great anticipation.

The DOOR CHIME SOUNDS.

PICARD

Come.

TROI

I thought you'd want to know,

Captain, the Council members have

all been beamed aboard and

assigned quarters.

PICARD

Excellent.

TROI

It really is quite late, Captain.

PICARD

Tell me, Counselor, in regard

to my lecture, which do you

suppose would provide greater

clarity? A chronological

structure, or a division of each

excavation's findings into various

sociological, religious, and

environmental sub-groupings?

TROI

I thought you had already decided

on a chronological structure.

PICARD

Still, there is something to be

said for a more scientific

approach.

TROI

Captain, may I make a suggestion?

PICARD

By all means.

TROI

Relax! You've written a brilliant

speech.

PICARD

It needs to be. Tomorrow I'll

be addressing some of the greatest

scientific minds in the

Federation. Switzer,

Klarc-Tarn-Droth, McFarland.

Giants in the field of Archeology.

Next to them I'm nothing but an

enthusiastic amateur.

TROI

I doubt they think of you as an

amateur... not when it comes to

the ruins of Tagus Three.

PICARD

Well, I have done my homework...

I've examined the findings of

every archaeological expedition

conducted on the planet's

surface...

TROI

It's unfortunate the Taguans no

longer allow outsiders to visit

the ruins.

PICARD

Indeed. Especially since we still

know so little about their

origin...

Hopefully, I've been able to

construct some intriguing theories

of my own.

TROI

I'm sure the council members will

agree that you have.

PICARD

Your support is appreciated,

Deanna.

ACT ONE SCENE TWO

PICARD'S QUARTERS

The door OPENS. Picard ENTERS looking somewhat

fatigued.

The first thing he notices -- is a Horga'hn sitting

on his desk. Picard looks at it, curious... where the

hell did this thing come from? Then...

VASH

Bring back any memories?

Picard turns to see VASH stepping out of the shadows

near the door. For a moment he's taken completely

off-guard.

PICARD

Vash? How did you get in here?

VASH

I came in through the window.

Picard barely has the chance to regain his aplomb when

she snakes an arm around him and they kiss. It's going

to last awhile.

PICARD

I had no idea you were a member

of the Archaeology Council.

Vash only smiles.

PICARD

You are a member?

(a beat)

Aren't you?

VASH

(smiling)

More or less.

PICARD

Why have you come to Tagus Three?

VASH

To see you, of course.

PICARD

Is that the only reason?

VASH

Isn't it enough?

She's moves closer to him. It's an intimate moment.

PICARD

(smiling)

I wish I could believe you?

VASH

(smiling right back)

I'd be disappointed if you did.

(a beat)

I really have missed you,

Jean-Luc.

But before they can act on a mutual impulse the DOOR

CHIMES. Picard waits until Vash steps away before

answering.

PICARD

Come.

BEVERLY

I'm sorry I'm late...

(noticing Vash)

Oh, excuse me. I didn't know you

had company.

PICARD

That's quite all right, Doctor.

Beverly Crusher allow me to

introduce Vash. A friend of mine

with the Archeology Council.

The two women exchange greetings.

BEVERLY

(to Vash)

I didn't mean to interrupt. The

Captain and I often have evening tea.

VASH

Yes, Jean-Luc has told me all

about you.

BEVERLY

Really? When was that?

VASH

On Risa. Where we met.

BEVERLY

I see.

(to Picard)

That must have been during your

vacation last year.

PICARD

So it was.

BEVERLY

(to Vash)

I'm surprised he never mentioned

you.

VASH

So am I.

VASH

Are you busy, Doctor?

BEVERLY

Not at the moment.

VASH

I was wondering, I would love to

see some more of this marvelous

ship...

BEVERLY

I'd be delighted to show it to

you. If that's alright with you,

Jean-Luc.

PICARD

Of course.

But he doesn't seem thrilled at the prospect. As Vash

passes him on the way out...

VASH

(sotto voce)

Don't worry, I promise to behave

myself.

Picard does not look reassured.

ACT ONE SCENE THREE

TEN FORWARD

The lounge is only lightly populated at the moment.

Riker is seated alone having a drink.

Beverly and Vash ENTER.

BEVERLY

And this is Ten Forward, where

the Council's welcoming reception

is to be held this afternoon.

VASH

I couldn't think of a better

location.

Tell me, does Jean-Luc come here

often?

BEVERLY

No, not often.

VASH

I didn't think so.

BEVERLY

The Captain is a very private man.

VASH

He certainly acted that way when

we first met.

(smiling)

But I managed to loosen him up.

BEVERLY

Would you like something to drink?

VASH

Please.

Beverly walks over to the bar. Vash checks out the

view from the window as Riker APPROACHES.

RIKER

Eternity never looked so lovely.

VASH

Excuse me?

RIKER

I was referring to the view.

Eternity never looked so lovely.

VASH

You must be Commander Riker.

RIKER

(surprised)

I'm afraid you have me at a

disadvantage.

VASH

I didn't mean to interrupt. I

believe you were about to tell

me that my eyes are as mysterious

as the stars.

Riker is intrigued. How the hell did she know?

RIKER

You're a Betazoid.

VASH

Not at all. It's just that

Jean-Luc does quite a good

imitation of you.

RIKER

He does?

Beverly comes back with the drinks.

BEVERLY

I see you two have met.

RIKER

Not exactly.

BEVERLY

Vash is a member of the Archeology

Council. And a friend of the

Captain.

RIKER

So I've gathered.

BEVERLY

They met during his visit to Risa.

RIKER

On Risa?

(amused)

That must have been a better

vacation than he let on.

VASH

You mean he never mentioned me

to you either?

RIKER

Believe me, if he had, I would

have remembered.

VASH

(a bit frustrated)

You'd think he'd have told someone

about me.

COMPUTER VOICE

Doctor Crusher, please report to

Sickbay.

BEVERLY

On my way.

(to Vash)

I'm afraid I won't be able to

finish up our tour.

Perhaps Commander Riker could fill

in for me.

RIKER

It would be my pleasure.

Beverly leaves. Riker and Vash head for the door.

VASH

So you're the one who asked

Jean-Luc to buy the Horga'han.

RIKER

That was me.

VASH

Tell me Commander, do you collect

sexual fertility symbols?

RIKER

I wouldn't call it a very large

collection.

ACT ONE SCENE FOUR BRIDGE

DATA and GEORDI at Science Station, WORF at Tactical.

Riker and Vash EXIT the aft turbolift.

RIKER

And that brings us to the Main

Bridge, the Command center of the

Enterprise, and the end of our

tour.

He brings her over to the Science Station.

RIKER

Vash, I'd like you to meet

Commander La Forge and Commander

Data...

An exchange of greetings. Riker gestures over to Worf

who looks on with disapproval.

RIKER

And this is Lieutenant Worf.

(noticing Worf's scowl)

Something wrong, Lieutenant?

WORF

Sir, I was not informed that

Council Members had been granted

bridge clearance.

RIKER

I think we can make an exception

in this case, Mister Worf. Vash

is the Captain's guest.

WORF

(finally)

Welcome aboard.

VASH

Is this where Jean-Luc sits?

RIKER

That's the big chair.

To everyone's surprise she sits down in it. It

provides a definite sense of power.

VASH

I can see where being a starship

Captain does have its rewards.

PICARD

I'm glad you approve.

All eyes turn to Picard who has just exited the Ready

Room. Vash stands.

VASH

Jean-Luc. Commander Riker was

just showing me the bridge.

RIKER

Doctor Crusher was called to

Sickbay.

PICARD

So, did you enjoy your tour?

VASH

Very much.

PICARD

Good.

Another awkward moment.

VASH

I guess I'll head back to my room

now and get ready for the

reception.

PICARD

By all means.

Well, I suppose I'll see you then.

VASH

I look forward to it.

She turns and makes the long walk back up the ramp to

the turbolift.

RIKER

(watching her go)

Fascinating woman.

DATA

You find something humorous,

Geordi?

GEORDI

Didn't you notice how ill-at-ease

the Captain seemed around Vash?

DATA

Yes. However I see nothing

amusing in his hostility toward

her.

GEORDI

That wasn't hostility, Data.

(off Data's look)

He likes her.

(a beat)

A lot.

Still smiling, Geordi turns back to the science

monitor. A puzzled Data is left pondering the

intricacies of human relationships.

ACT ONE SCENE FIVE

TEN FORWARD

The reception. COUNCIL MEMBERS mingle with the crew.

A rather informal time is being had by all.

Vash has cornered TROI over by a buffet table.

VASH

I don't understand, I thought

being ship's counselor meant the

Captain confided in you.

TROI

He does. When he feels it's

necessary.

VASH

And he never spoke to you about

me?

TROI

Not that I can recall.

VASH

Not even a hint?

TROI

You must understand, the Captain

is a very...

TROI & VASH

(together)

Private man.

VASH

I know...

She spots Picard speaking with someone….

VASH

Will you excuse me?

TROI

Certainly.

Vash walks off and passes by Worf, Geordi, Beverly and Data.

WORF

(still watching Vash)

Nice legs.

(off Geordi's look)

For a human.

Picard talking to a member of the council

PICARD

I agree, the Vulcan excavations

on Tagus Three were extensive.

Unfortunately, they were confined

to the northeastern part of the

city.

Vash appears at his elbow.

VASH

Jean-Luc, we need to talk.

PICARD

(to the council person)

Pardon me.

He and Vash move to a private spot.

PICARD

The reception seems to be a

success.

VASH

Forget the reception for a moment.

How come you've never mentioned

me to your friends?

PICARD

What would you have me tell them?

VASH

Maybe that we met, for one thing.

That we had an adventure together.

Some fun...

PICARD

I'm afraid that wasn't possible.

VASH

Why not?

PICARD

It would have

been... inappropriate.

VASH

I wasn't expecting you to go into

any intimate details.

PICARD

A Captain does not share his

personal feelings with his crew.

VASH

Is that a Starfleet regulation?

Or did you make that one up

yourself?

PICARD

I'm sorry if you're upset.

VASH

And I'm sorry if my being here

embarrasses you.

And with that she turns and walks away.

Act Two Scene One

Picard walks past Riker

RIKER

How was the reception?

PICARD

(brusque)

Splendid.

He EXITS into the Ready Room.

Picard ENTERS and stops as he SEES -- Q

seated at his desk dressed in a Starfleet uniform.

Q

Jean-Luc! How wonderful to see

you again.

Well don't just stand there, say

something.

Picard advances into the room.

PICARD

Get out of my chair.

Q

I was hoping for something more

along the lines of "Welcome back,

Q. It's a pleasure to see you

again old friend."

PICARD

We are not friends.

Q

You wound me, mon Capitain.

There, perhaps now your manners

will show some improvement.

PICARD

What brings you here, Q? Have you

been banished from the Continuum

once again?

Q

Hardly. They're still apologizing

to me for the last time.

PICARD

Then what is it you want?

Q

Must I always have a reason to

stop by. I was in the sector

and...

(Picard doesn't buy it)

Alright. You force a confession

from me. The truth is I have a

debt to settle.

PICARD

A debt?

Q

To you, Picard. And it gnaws at

me. It interferes with each day.

PICARD

I have no idea what you're talking

about...

Q

Without your assistance at our

last encounter, I never would

have survived. I would have taken

my own life but for you, Jean-Luc.

PICARD

We all make mistakes.

Q

Your good deed made possible my

reinstatement into the continuum.

And I resent owing you

anything... so I'm here to pay

up... what shall it be... tell

me and I'll be gone...

PICARD

Just be gone. That will suffice

nicely.

Q

No, it must be something...

something...

(searching)

...constructive. My new word for

the day.

PICARD

Some other time, all right?

Right now I have several things

to attend to.

Q

Yes, your speech. I've read it.

I found it dull and pedantic.

Much like yourself.

(an idea)

I could help you with it.

PICARD

No.

Q

You've never actually been to the

ruins in Tagus Three, have you?

PICARD

They've been sealed off for over

a century.

Q

How can you write about what you

haven't seen?

(brightening)

I'll take you there!

PICARD

Impossible. That would mean

breaking Taguan law.

Q

Must you always be so ethical?

(thinking)

I suppose we could travel back

in time. You could see what Tagus

was like two billion years ago.

They really knew how to have fun

in those days.

PICARD

I'm afraid my answer is still no.

My lecture will have to stand on

its own. Now, will you please

leave my ship.

Q

Then you refuse my help?

PICARD

Completely.

A beat as Q broods. Then finally...

Q

(mildly)

You're simply impossible to find

a gift for, Picard.

And he's gone.

PICARD

(to Conn)

Commander Riker, report to my

Ready Room.

Riker ENTERS.

RIKER

Yes, Captain?

PICARD

I've just been paid a visit by

Q.

RIKER

Q?

(concerned)

Any idea what he's up to?

PICARD

He wants to do something nice for

me.

RIKER

I'll alert the crew.

Act Two Scene Two. CORRIDOR - MINUTES LATER

Picard EXITS the turbolift. He heads down the Corridor

on the way to meet with one of the Council Officials.

At the hall he hesitates, turns left instead of right.

Picard HALTS at a doorway. RINGS the bell.

VASH (V.O.)

Who's there?

PICARD

It's me.

VASH (V.O.)

Who?

PICARD

Jean-Luc.

The door slides open. Vash stands in the entrance.

VASH

Yes.

PICARD

May I come in?

VASH

What for?

PICARD

To talk.

VASH

I'm listening.

PICARD

If it's all the same to you I'd

rather this discussion not take

place in a public corridor.

He slips past her.

The first thing Picard notices are various digging

tools piled in a corner. He looks over at Vash.

VASH

I thought these were "private"

quarters.

Picard picks up a PADD off the table.

PICARD

And I thought I was the only

reason you came to Tagus.

VASH

I never fooled you for a second.

She moves closer to Picard.

VASH

Still, you are the most important

reason.

PICARD

Am I?

Vash steps away.

VASH

That's the trouble with being such

a well known liar. Even when I

tell the truth no one believes

me.

Picard refuses to be swayed.

PICARD

I'm afraid all this equipment will

have to be confiscated.

VASH

Is that necessary?

PICARD

I could have you placed in the

brig.

VASH

Why don't you?

PICARD

If the Taguans were to catch you

down there...

VASH

You gave me the same warning about

Sarathong Five.

PICARD

I remember.

VASH

Well, it didn't stop me from going

there. I brought back some very

impressive artifacts, too.

PICARD

Which you no doubt sold for a nice

profit.

VASH

(angry)

It's what I do!

PICARD

Not while you're aboard my ship.

I will not allow it.

VASH

Let's get one thing straight,

Picard. I can not change who

I am for you or anyone else.

PICARD

Nor can I change who I am.

VASH

(calmly)

Then we have nothing more to say

to each other.

PICARD

So it would seem.

Picard leaves. Vash sits. She's

depressed and upset.

Q's head APPEARS from the bulkhead behind her. He's

obviously overheard their discussion and found it

fascinating.

ACT TWO SCENE THREE PICARD'S QUARTERS

Picard ENTERS, disgruntled. He goes into his bedroom,

which is dark. As he enters, Q appears

Q

Sleeping alone tonight, Picard?

PICARD

I'm in no mood for your

foolishness, Q.

Q

I thought there was something

different about you. You seemed

tense, preoccupied. Somewhat...

smaller.

(a beat)

At first I thought it was that

horrible lecture of yours. But

I was mistaken.

PICARD

Whatever game you want to play

will have to wait until tomorrow.

Q

I had such hopes for you,

Jean-Luc. I thought you were a

bit more evolved than the rest

of your species. But now I

realize you're as weak as all the

others.

(a beat)

Still, it pains me to see the

great Picard brought down by a

woman.

PICARD

What woman?

Q

Don't play coy with me Captain.

I witnessed your little spat with

Vash. Nor will I soon forget that

look of misery on your face. The

pain. The anguish. If I didn't

know better I would have thought

you were already married.

PICARD

You really must be bored, Q.

You're letting your imagination

run away with you.

Q

This human emotion of Love is

a dangerous thing, Picard. You

are obviously ill equipped to

handle it. She's found a

vulnerability in you... a

vulnerability that I've wanted

to find for years. If I had known

this sooner, I would have arrived

as a female. Mark my words,

Jean-Luc, this is your Achilles

heel..

PICARD

Believe what you wish.

Q

You deny you care for this woman?

Picard doesn't answer.

Q

Believe me, Picard, I'd be doing

you a big favor if I simply turned

her into a Klabnian eel.

PICARD

(very seriously)

Stay away from her, Q.

Q

I only want to help... my debt

to you...

PICARD

(interrupting)

... is hereby nullified. I don't

want your help... your advice...

your favors... or for that matter

-- you. Can you understand that

once and for all?

Q

You would have me stand idly by

while she leads you to your

destruction?

PICARD

Yes!

Q

As you wish.

ACT TWO SCENE FOUR. MEETING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

As Picard and Riker ENTER...

RIKER

Knock 'em dead, Captain.

Picard nods and moves toward the podium; Riker toward

the audience.

As he steps up to the podium. He's waited for this

moment a long time.

PICARD

Ladies and gentlemen, members of

the Archeology Council. Welcome.

It is the mystery of Tagus Three

that brings us together today...

a mystery that has invited more

argument and deduction than the

best Sherlock Holmes or Dixon Hill

tale. Well, if you'll excuse the

conceit, you're about to hear my

own detective story.

Suddenly, a hunting cap, with feather, appears on

Beverly's head. As Troi attempts to point this

phenomenon out to Beverly, a similar cap appears on her

own head. They stare at each other in disbelief.

PICARD (V.O.)

For several years, I have been

trying to unravel the secrets of

Tagus Three. Needless to say,

I have not succeeded.

However, I have, I believe,

turned up some new information,

that if nothing else, raises a

whole new set of mysteries that

I hope we can discuss during our

time togther.

Riker reacts to the quarterstaff that appears in his

hand; Geordi to the mandolin that appears in his.

PICARD (V.O.)

There have been nine hundred and

forty-seven known Archaeological

excavations conducted on the

planet's surface.

Data finds himself wearing a cowl... and holding a leg

of lamb.

PICARD

Out of that number some

seventy-four are generally

considered to have revealed

findings of major importance.

WORF Astounded by the chaperone which has appeared on his

shoulders.

PICARD

The earliest took place some

twenty-two thousand years ago.

who along with the rest of the theater audience is

beginning to realize that something peculiar is going

on.

PICARD

The last was completed within

the last four hundred years.

Suddenly he's dressed in a jerkin and cap of familiar

Lincoln green. The audience REACTS. So does Picard.

Then, as a yeoman's bow appears in his hand...

PICARD

What the hell... !

He VANISHES.

FOREST - DAY

Picard, Riker, Geordi, Data, Worf, Beverly and Troi all

APPEAR at the same time... all dressed in period

costume. Beverly and Troi wear men's clothing.

Beverly also carries a sword; Troi a longbow and

arrows. Data is bald except for a soupbowl fringe

plastered to his forehead. Riker wears a yellow jerkin

and carries his quarterstaff. Worf is dressed like a

dandy and Geordi still holds his madolin.

As they all react...

PICARD

(raging)

Q!

TROI

Is this Tagus Three?

PICARD

I doubt there are many oak trees

on Tagus. No, my guess is this

is supposed to be Earth.

(off reactions)

Sometime around the twelfth

century. And this is England,

Sherwood Forest to be precise.

Or at least Q's re-creation of

it.

RIKER

That explains these costumes.

PICARD

Exactly, Number One.

(a beat)

Or should I say, John Little.

Riker studies Picard to see if he's serious.

BEVERLY

If he's Little John, that would

make you...

PICARD

I know. Robin Hood.

A beat as this sinks in.

WORF

Sir, I protest. I am not a merry

man.

DATA

On the contrary, Lieutenant Worf,

your clothing identifies you with

the character of Will Scarlett.

Just as Geordi's Mandolin suggests

he is Alan-A-Dale.

RIKER

And you, Mister Data, bear a

striking resemblance to one Friar

Tuck.

WORF

I will not play the fool for Q's

amusement.

He takes off his cap, looks at it in disgust, and

slams it on the ground.

PICARD

You're quite right, Worf.

(loudly)

Do you hear that Q? You may as

well return us to our ship

immediately.

They react to a horse's shrill whinny and turn to

see...

SIR GUY OF GISBOURNE enters

Mounted on a sleek charger, sword drawn.

SIR GUY

I have you at last, Robin Hood.

As he charges at Picard...

Worf draws his own sword to defend his Captain...

Sir Guy rides past Worf, cutting him across the

shoulder with his sword. Worf is ready to fight on,

but... Suddenly an arrow slams into a tree next to

Picard...

Men at arts Coming over a nearby hill. Longbows at the ready.

Three more arrows strike trees around them. Picard

sees there's only one hope to escape.

PICARD

Quick. Into the forest.

WORF prepares to cover their retreat.

Hanging back as the others disappear into the trees.

PICARD

Mister Worf. That's an order.

Worf follows Picard into the forest.

A furious Sir Guy turns to his men, who search the

underbrush.

SIR GUY

Enough, you fools. We'll never

find them in the greenwood.

ACT THREE SCENE ONE: FOREST - A GLADE - DAY

Picard and his crew are resting. He approaches Worf

who is being tended to by Beverly (sans tricorder.)

BEVERLY

(applying a makeshift

bandage)

I've managed to stop the

bleeding.

Q appears on horseback. He's garbed in the cloak and

livery of the High Sheriff of Nottingham.

An angry Picard approaches Q.

PICARD

It's about time you showed up,

Q.

Q

I'd prefer it if you addressed

me as His Honor the High Sheriff

of Nottingham.

PICARD

We will not share in this

pointless fantasy of yours.

Q dismounts.

Q

Fine. Wait here and do nothing.

By mid-day tomorrow, you'll all

be safely back aboard your ship.

But you will have to accept the

consequences of your inaction.

PICARD

What consequences?

Q

What's the one thing Robin Hood

is famous for?

A beat. Nobody answers. Then...

GEORDI

Robbing from the rich to give to

the poor?

Q

Besides that.

DATA

Are you referring to his rescue

of Maid Marian from Nottingham

Castle?

Q

Right you are, Data.

Q looks over at Picard with glee.

Q

And it just so happens that Sir

Guy of Gisbourne has decreed that

Marian's head comes off tomorrow

at noon.

PICARD

(grimly)

Vash.

Q smiles. He's enjoying himself thoroughly.

Q

The choice is yours my dear,

Robin. You can either take your

ease here within the sylvan glade

or risk your life to save a woman

you care nothing about.

PICARD

My feelings toward Vash are

irrelevant. I'd attempt to save

any innocent life, as you well

know.

Q

But what of your merry men? Are

you willing to put them in

jeopardy as well? Is Vash's life

worth losing hers or his or even

his... ?

(the last being Worf)

Though I admit he would make a

perfect throw rug at Nottingham

Castle.

PICARD

Q, I ask you to end this now,

before anyone else gets hurt.

Q swings up onto the horse.

Q

Impossible. You see, I've given

this fantasy as you call it, a

life of its own. I don't know

how things will turn out anymore

than you do.

(a beat)

But of one thing I am certain.

If you dare set foot in Nottingham

Castle, blood will be spilled.

He, and the horse vanish.

ACT THREE SCENE TWO: MAID MARIAN'S CHAMBERS - DAY

A small, stark room in the tower; minimal furniture

to include a wooden bench. Vash, dressed in Marian's

virginal white, paces the floor. She's watched by her Servant.

SERVANT

You'll wear yourself out with

all that pacing, M'lady.

VASH

I told you to stop calling me

that. My name's Vash.

SERVANT

My poor lamb, it's a brain

sickness you've got for sure.

Can't I get you something to ease

your suffering?

VASH

I could use a drink.

SERVANT

It wasn't spirits I was thinking

of M'lady.

She picks up a wooden box.

SERVANT

I have here some nice fresh

leeches to drain the fever.

Vash looks into the box, makes a disgusted look and sound, and bats the box out of her hands.)

VASH

Out.

SERVANT

(She picks up the box) But, M’lady. Those are the best leeches in the land! (She seems to have forgotten her line) They cost at least… twenty dollars (stage manager cues: shillings) shillings. Yes. Twenty shillings.

VASH

Get out.

The servant rushes to the door, but before she can get

there it opens and Sir Guy ENTERS.

SERVANT

Oh, her mind's in an awful

turmoil, Sir Guy. (She holds the box at Sir Guy, who looks pissed and promptly bats the box out of her hands, and she picks it up)

Sir Guy stares at Vash with undisguised desire.

VASH

Who the hell are you?

SERVANT

M'Lady, everyone in Nottingham

knows, Sir Guy of Gisbourne.

VASH

Sir Guy of what?

Her Servant rolls her eyes towards heaven, and shaking

her head hurries out of the room.

Sir Guy closes the door behind her.

SIR GUY

Do not mock me, Lady Marian. I'm

prepared to offer you one final

chance to change your mind.

He grabs hold of her.

SIR GUY

Will you marry me?

Vash pulls away and slaps him across the face.

SIR GUY

(coldly)

I see. Then the execution will

proceed as scheduled.

Sir Guy turns to leave.

VASH

What execution?

SIR GUY

(turning back)

I warn you Marian, this pathetic

attempt at feigning madness will

not save your life.

VASH

(shocked)

You mean I'm the one getting

executed?

Though Vash is at a loss to explain how she came to be

in this current predicament, a lifetime of adventure

has honed her survival instincts to a razor's edge.

VASH

Sir Guy, wait? Can't we talk this

over?

(a beat)

I admit, I haven't been myself

lately.

(flashing her best

smile)

Perhaps we've both been acting

a bit hasty.

She sits down on the bench. Pats the space next to

her.

VASH

Please.

Sir Guy smiles. Delighted.

ACT THREE SCENE THREE: SHERWOOD FOREST DAY

We hear bad mandolin playing in the background as crew practices arrows, fighting with swords etcetera. We HEAR

the THWACK of impact.

Data enters with an arrow in his chest.

Troi hurries over.

TROI

Data, are you alright?

A beat, as Data checks his systems.

DATA

The arrow impacted just above

my sixth intercostal support,

penetrating my secondary

subprocessor.

Data moves his arm up and down and in and out.

DATA

(continuing)

Fortunately, none of my

biofunctions seem impaired.

He exits

Beverly is checking Worf's wound in the background

as Geordi sits on a log strumming the mandolin... it

sounds like fingernails on a blackboard.

Worf gets up, crosses to Geordi, and takes the

mandolin out of his hands. He walks over, and smashes

it against a tree. Hands the neck back to Geordi.

WORF

Sorry.

Hedgehog crosses stage, Stage manager enters and takes it offstage.

A relieved grin from Riker as he watches Picard buckle

on his sword.

RIKER

It's about time we got out of

here, sir.

PICARD

Not we Commander. You and the

others are to wait here until I

return.

RIKER

You're not planning to go after

her alone, are you?

The others gather around.

PICARD

This is not a mission. It's

personal, between Q and myself.

I don't want any of you involved.

RIKER

But Captain...

PICARD

You have your orders, Commander.

I expect you to follow them.

With a final glance at his crew, Picard heads off

towards Nottingham.

ACT FOUR SCENE ONE

COURTYARD INSIDE WALLS OF CASTLE - NIGHT

Vash and Sir Guy, looking surprisingly chummy as they

approach from another part of the courtyard. She

carries a bouquet of fresh-picked flowers. Sir Guy

holds up a pomegranate. Vash smiles and demurely

nibbles it. Marian’s nurse follows with a the box of leeches.

A suspicious Q approaches them.

Q

Such benevolence, Sir Guy,

allowing the condemned prisoner

fresh air.

SIR GUY

You're mistaken, Sheriff. Maid

Marian has consented to be my

wife.

SERVANT

Oh, Sherriff, my lady’s come back to her senses and decided to marry…. (she seems to have forgetten her line. Stage managers cues: Sir Guy of Gisborne). Sir Guy of Gisborne. But I’ve kept the leeches just in case she falls ill again. (she shoves them in Q’s face and he bats the box out of her hands, she picks up the box, looking defeated)

Q looks at Vash in disbelief.

Q

But that's impossible?

Vash motions to a servant who approaches with a tray

and two goblets of wine.

VASH

(innocently)

Not at all. Though I admit a

maiden seldom has the opportunity

to win herself such a noble

husband.

She takes a goblet from the tray and hands it to Sir

Guy...

SIR GUY

A toast to the most beautiful

bride-to-be in all of England.

He goes to drink.

Q

Hold there, Sir Guy.

He knocks the goblet to the ground.

SIR GUY

Have you taken leave of your

senses?

Q

It could be poisoned. Some foul

scheme of Robin Hood. She's in

league with him still, I'll

warrant.

VASH

Robin Hood?

A beat as Vash absorbs this rather bizarre accusation.

She has no choice but to bluff her way through it.

VASH

Oh, Robin Hood... that was over

long ago.

Q

Why, all of Nottingham knows you're

in love with him.

VASH

That's a lie.

(to Sir Guy)

He... bewitched me. Put me under

some evil spell.

Sir Guy gives her hand an encouraging pat.

SIR GUY

Just as I suspected.

(to Q)

You can add sorcery to the list

of charges against that rogue.

Q

But Sir Guy, if anyone has been

bewitched it's you.

Sir Guy stands. His hand is placed firmly on the hilt

of his sword.

SIR GUY

Silence. Any further impudence

and it'll be your head on the

chopping block.

(a beat)

Guards, escort the Lady Marian

to her chamber.

VASH

(standing)

But I'd much rather stay with you.

SIR GUY

Of course you would, my child.

But I have important business to

discuss with the Sheriff.

(a beat; then dripping

with implication)

And you must prepare for your

wedding.

VASH

I count the hours.

She kisses him. She allows herself to be led away, but

not before her eyes flash him the promise of future

delights.

SIR GUY

Lovely creature.

Q

(with grudging

admiration)

She is intriguing.

Q is determined not to allow his well-laid scheme go

astray.

Q

Sir Guy, perhaps it would be wise

to keep this wedding a secret for

now.

SIR GUY

What are you babbling about?

Q

You still hope to capture Robin

Hood, don't you?

SIR GUY

I live for the moment.

Q

(thinking of Picard)

Well, if he were to hear that

Marian's life was no longer in

danger, there would be no need

for him to come to Nottingham to

rescue her.

Sir Guy slaps Q on the back.

SIR GUY

By heavens, you're right. No word

of my wedding shall leave these

walls.

What better way to celebrate a

marriage than with an execution.

Sir Guy and Q share a chuckle, then go their separate

ways.

Q

(musing)

This could be fun.

ACT FOUR SCENE TWO MAID MARIAN'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Vash paces around the room. Suddenly she stops.

Listening to what could be a faint rustling of vines, is coming

from outside her open window. She moves towards the

embrasure, when SUDDENLY a hand APPEARS on the ledge.

With a final GRUNT, Picard lifts himself through the

window. Vash throws herself at him.

VASH

Jean-Luc. Am I glad to see you.

She throws herself into his arms, and kisses him.

VASH

You would not believe what I've

been through. One minute I'm on

the Enterprise... the next thing

I know I'm here in Nottingham.

First, they're going to chop my

head off... and now I'm supposed

to marry someone named Sir Guy...

and everyone insists on calling

me Marian...

PICARD

Yes, I know.

VASH

You do? But how...

For the first time she notices his outfit.

VASH

You're Robin Hood?

PICARD

My staff and I were brought here

by an old adversary of mine named

Q. I'll tell you the rest once

we're safe.

He leads her towards the window.

PICARD

Come, we don't have much time.

VASH

Are the others outside?

PICARD

They're waiting for us back in

Sherwood.

That brings Vash to a quick stop.

VASH

You mean you came alone?

PICARD

Yes, now let's...

VASH

What kind of plan is that?

PICARD

An excellent one if you'd only

hurry up.

But Vash refuses to budge.

VASH

You do realize our lives are at

stake here.

PICARD

Only too well.

VASH

And this is the best strategy

you could come up with? One man

against an entire castle.

PICARD

I suppose you know of a better

one.

VASH

How about this? You go. I'll

stay here.

She walks away from the window.

PICARD

And do what?

VASH

Marry Sir Guy if I have to.

PICARD

(ironic)

That is brilliant.

VASH

If there's a way to escape, I'll

find it, eventually. With my head

still attached.

PICARD

You don't really expect me to

leave you here?

He reaches for her. She pulls away.

VASH

I can take care of myself.

PICARD

Must you be so stubborn?

Suddenly the door is flying OPEN and Sir Guy enters

backed by a retinue of SOLDIERS.

SIR GUY

There'll be no escape for you this

time, Robin Hood.

PICARD

(to Vash)

Behind me.

He steps in front of her and reaches for his sword.

But Vash is quicker. She pulls the blade out of his

scabbard and points it at his chest.

VASH

You should have left while you

had the chance.

Sir Guy advances on them, smiling.

SIR GUY

Well done, my dear.

VASH

(sweetly)

Consider it my wedding present

to you.

The Guards lead Picard away.

Picard and the Guards come down the stairs. He barely

glances at a beaming Q as he's hurried away. Sir Guy

follows behind.

Q

Congratulations, Gisbourne. I

see you've snared the jackal.

SIR GUY

It's Marian who deserves the

credit. Took him with his own

sword.

On Q's astonished REACTION...

ACT FOUR SCENE THREE

MAID MARIAN'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Vash is seated at a table, writing feverishly. Her

SERVANT ENTERS and scuttles across the room to her. She holds the box of leeches)

SERVANT

You sent for me, M'Lady?

VASH

You must take this letter to

Robin's men. (She bats the box out of Servant’s hand and puts the letter into them)

SERVANT

You want me to go to Sherwood

Forest? At this time of night?

VASH

You'll leave immediately.

SERVANT

(glancing out the

window)

But it's dark. I'll get lost.

Besides, it's not safe. What with

all them hedge robbers and worse

lurking about.

VASH

Please, this is urgent.

SERVANT

You ask me, you'd be better off

staying with Sir Guy. He's got

a (she seems to forget her line. Stage manager appears to cue her, but then she remembers!) future. Why you'll be living

in London before you know it.

VASH

But you must go. Otherwise,

they're going to kill him.

the door SWINGS open. Servant leaps up dropping the

letter on the table as Q ENTERS. Servant leaves the room)

VASH

How dare you come barging in here

this way!

Q

I come to offer apologies for my

harsh words earlier. I had no

idea you were so ruthless. The

cold blooded way you betrayed

Robin was most impressive.

Q is now standing right by the table. Vash forces

herself not to glance down at the letter.

VASH

That's most gracious of you.

Q

I admit I was surprised...

(a beat)

Though perhaps not as surprised

as Jean-Luc.

Now it's Vash's turn to be surprised.

VASH

You're Q.

Q

(bowing)

And you are a very interesting

woman.

He notices the letter.

Q

What's this?

She tries to snatch it away.

VASH

Give me that.

But it's too late.

Q

A letter to Riker?

(reading)

Quick... Come to Castle... Must save

Captain...

(cheerfully)

Why this is wonderful. Such

marvelous duplicity. You

certainly fooled Sir Guy. And

me as well.

(a shrewd glance at

Vash)

I do believe you're worth further

study.

VASH

(turning on the charm)

Am I?

Q

Unfortunately, we won't have the

time.

(shouting)

Guards!

They enter.

Q

Take this traitor away.

(to Vash)

It appears there's going to be

a double execution.

Vash is marched from the room.

And as Q gloats over this latest turn of events:

ACT FIVE SCENE ONE

COURTYARD - THE NEXT DAY

A CROWD has gathered to SEE the show. Sir Guy and

Q sit together at a dais at one end of the courtyard.

We HEAR VOICES coming

down off-camera, drawing close.

PICARD (V.O.)

My fault?

VASH (V.O.)

Yes, your fault.

PICARD (V.O.)

We'd have been safe in Sherwood

if you hadn't grabbed my sword.

Picard and Vash, both wearing shackles, come into VIEW

as they walk toward CAMERA...

VASH

I grabbed it to prevent you from

being killed.

PICARD

You should have never interfered.

VASH

You were the one interfering.

PICARD

I was trying to rescue you.

VASH

Next time don't bother.

PICARD

I won't.

They come to a halt in front of the executioners block.

Q steps forward to meet them.

Q

Don't you two ever stop arguing?

No response.

Q

Tell me Picard, as you stand here

facing the termination of your

insect existence, do you see what

has led you to this end?

(beat, no reply)

Was she worth it?

PICARD

Can we just get this over with.

VASH

(hurt)

Are you implying I'm not worth

it?

But Picard keeps his eyes fixed on Q.

PICARD

Your game was for my benefit,

Q. She is innocent in all this.

Q

She is many things, none of them

innocent.

PICARD

Let her go.

VASH

Jean-Luc, you do care.

Q

A gallant gesture Picard. But

a futile one.

(a beat)

Farewell. I hope you'll both be

happy together.

He moves aside as Sir Guy rises to his feet.

SIR GUY

(to Picard & Vash)

You have been found guilty of

outlawry and high treason. Do

you have anything to say before

sentencing is carried out?

Impassive stares from the prisoners.

SIR GUY

Ready them for the block.

The Guards remove the chains. Vash and Picard are kneeling at the block.

A group of hooded monks have entered the courtyard.

Beneath the hoods are Riker, Worf, Geordi, Data,

Beverly and Troi

taking in the scene in front of them. Worf reaches

for the sword beneath his robe. Geordi lays a

restraining hand on Worf's arm.

GEORDI

Too many of them. We'd never

get to the Captain...

RIKER

Data, we need a diversion. Now.

Data opens his left arm, revealing the circuitry and

blinking lights within. He pulls out three small

components and fastens them together.

DATA

(to Riker)

Please stand back, Commander.

Microfusion cells can be somewhat

dangerous under high

temperatures...

Riker stands back. Data tosses the components into

the Tinker's fire. Tinker’s fire is played by the stage manager with red ribbons. Stage manager flails red ribbons wildly and says “KABOOM”, everyone looks over and is distracted while the crew goes in.

Amidst the confusion that follows, Picard leaps to his

feet and rams his elbow into the executioner's stomach,

knocking him to the ground. Picard then grabs hold

of one of his guards, and pulls his sword free of its scabbard

Riker, Worf, Geordi, Troi, Beverly and Data (who has

closed the panel on his arm) throw off their monk's

robes.

VOICES

It's the outlaws. Robin's band.

Sir Guy unsheathes his sword.

SIR GUY

Guards. Take Marian to the

tower.

Vash whirls and punches one of her captors but two

others drag her up the stairs.

Picard SEES Vash being taken away and tries to follow.

A guard tries to block him and is cut down.

As our crew beats back the attacking soldiers.

Picard comes face to face with Sir Guy.

SIR GUY

I'll have you know I'm the

greatest swordsman in all of

Nottingham.

A quick flurry of cuts and parries as they test each

others skill.

PICARD

That's very impressive.

They engage again.

PICARD

But there's something you should

know.

A furious series of strikes ending with their swords

crossed at the hilt, their faces inches apart.

SIR GUY

And what would that be?

PICARD

I'm not from Nottingham.

He pushes Sir Guy away.

Gradually Picard forces Sir Guy up the stairs leading

to Marian's room. Sir Guy, panic building, takes a

vicious cut at Picard's head. Picard ducks, thrusts

upward, and stabs Sir Guy through the body.

Sir Guy tumbles off the staircase. Picard exits

ACT FIVE SCENE TWO

Vash, listens to the SOUNDS of battle.

Suddenly, the door SWINGS and Picard races in.

VASH

Jean-Luc.

She runs into his arms. Picard is fed up with all

this, tosses the sword to the floor.

PICARD

(shouting)

It's over, Q. Now get us out of

here.

Q APPEARS in the room.

Q

(applauding)

My compliments, Captain. I doubt

Robin Hood himself could have done

better.

PICARD

If any of my people are hurt...

Q

Sadly, they're all fine... but

the point is they could have been

killed, and you might have been

too... all for the "Love Of A

Maid." My debt to you is paid,

Picard, if you have learned how

weak and vulnerable you really

are... if you can finally see how

"Love" brought out the worst in

you...

VASH

Nonsense. You're absolutely

wrong. It brought out the best

in him.

(to him, intimately)

His nobility, courage, self-sacrifice.

His tenderness.

Q

(to Vash)

You're good. Very good.

PICARD

(end of his patience)

Enough of this.

Q

Indeed.

He snaps his finger and Picard DISAPPEARS.

ACT FIVE SCENE THREE: MEETING ROOM

The room is empty. Picard, in uniform, suddenly

APPEARS at the podium. Riker and the others APPEAR

back in the audience, exactly where they were sitting

before. All back in their Starfleet uniforms. They

look around in confusion.

RIKER

Everybody here?

TROI

Where's Vash?

Picard scans the room. No sign of her.

PICARD

Computer, locate Council Member

Vash.

COMPUTER (VOICE)

Council Member Vash is not aboard

the Enterprise.

Off his look of concern...

ALL EXIT AS PICARD ENTERS READY ROOM

ACT FIVE SCENE FOUR

Vash MATERIALIZES.

VASH

Hello, Jean-Luc.

PICARD

(smiling)

Well, this is a relief. I was

afraid that Q...

VASH

There were a few things he wanted

to discuss with me.

PICARD

I'm surprised he wasn't too busy

gloating over his victory.

VASH

(beat)

He was right about one thing,

Jean-Luc. As ridiculous as it

was, his game did prove how much

you care.

PICARD

I may not share my feelings with

my crew, but I do have them.

A warm moment passes between them.

VASH

I'm going to miss you, Picard.

PICARD

I wouldn't be surprised if our

paths cross again.

VASH

I'll see to it.

They kiss.

PICARD

So, where are you off to now?

VASH

I haven't made up my mind.

Remind you of someone you know?

PICARD

(amused in spite of

himself)

As a matter of fact... yes.

Q

(Materializes and speaks to Vash)

We are going to have fun. I'll

take you places no human could

ever hope to see.

VASH

(to Picard)

Who can resist an offer like that?

Picard sees there's no way to change her mind. He

advances on Q.

PICARD

As payment in full for your debt

to me, you will guarantee her

safety...

Q

She will not be harmed, Jean-Luc.

I promise you that.

Picard looks over at Vash. A silent farewell.

Q

Well, aren't you going to kiss

her good-bye?

Picard and Vash stare at him until he gets the hint.

Q

Oh, all right.

He VANISHES.

Vash smiles at Picard.

VASH

Well aren't you?

A final kiss. Then Vash steps back.

VASH

Goodbye, Jean-Luc.

She VANISHES

Jean Luc takes a moment. End of Show.