

= The Battle ( Star Trek : The Next Generation ) =

" The Battle " is the eighth episode of the first season of the American science fiction television series Star Trek : The Next Generation and was originally aired on November 16 , 1987 , in broadcast syndication . The episode was written by Herbert Wright , based on a story by Larry Forrester , and directed by Rob Bowman .

Set in the 24th century , the series follows the adventures of the crew of the Starfleet starship Enterprise @-@ D. In this episode , Captain Jean @-@ Luc Picard ( Patrick Stewart ) is given his former vessel , the Stargazer , as a gift by the Ferengi DaiMon Bok ( Frank Corsentino ) who intends to use it to take revenge upon the Enterprise captain .

The Stargazer was to originally be represented by the movie @-@ era Enterprise model , but producers were convinced to use a design which had appeared on a model in Picard 's ready room in the series pilot . Several camera and compositing techniques were used by Bowman in filming the scenes aboard the bridge of the Stargazer , which was also a re @-@ dressed movie @-@ era Klingon Bird of Prey bridge set .

= = Plot = =

The Enterprise meets with a Ferengi vessel whose captain , DaiMon Bok , requests a meeting with Captain Picard . Picard meanwhile is suffering from persistent headaches and seeks the help of Doctor Beverly Crusher ( Gates McFadden ) . She scans Picard , but can not find what is causing them . Meanwhile , on the bridge , Wesley Crusher ( Wil Wheaton ) reports that a second vessel is approaching . Lt. Geordi La Forge ( LeVar Burton ) identifies it as a Federation Constellation @-@ class starship .

Bok and his first officer Kazago ( Doug Warhit ) transport to the bridge of the Enterprise . He announces that the newly arrived ship is a gift for " the hero of Maxia . " After Picard fails to get the reference , Data ( Brent Spiner ) reminds him that nine years ago , at Maxia , he was attacked by an unidentified aggressor which he destroyed . Bok angrily shouts that ship in question was Ferengi . The ship is identified as the U.S.S. Stargazer , Picard 's former command . Bok explains that he found the ship as a derelict and offers it to Picard for free . Picard explains that at Maxia , the Stargazer was heavily damaged before Picard executed an action which would come to be known as the " Picard Maneuver " . Using the warp drive , Picard ordered a short warp jump directly resulting in the enemy vessel 's light speed based sensors briefly detecting the ship in two places at once and allowing Picard to win the battle . Due to the damage , the crew of the Stargazer abandoned ship after the battle .

Picard and an away team board the Stargazer , and he orders a chest of his belongings to be sent to the Enterprise . Hidden in the chest is an orb , which glows brighter as Bok activates it , causing Picard to be hit by a wave of pain . Dr. Crusher orders him back to the Enterprise . Data meanwhile finds a discrepancy in the Stargazer 's logs stating that the Ferengi were attacked under a flag of truce . Upon further investigation , Data and La Forge report to Commander William Riker ( Jonathan Frakes ) that the logs were certainly faked . Dr. Crusher and Counselor Deanna Troi ( Marina Sirtis ) discuss the Captain , and Wesley shows them some unusual activity from the Ferengi ship . They head to inform Riker to alert him to the signals , who is informed by the Enterprise computer that Picard has transported to the Stargazer .

Picard finds Bok waiting for him , who has another orb . Bok explains that it was his son in command of the Ferengi vessel at Maxia , and he came here seeking his revenge . He places the orb down and leaves Picard on the Stargazer bridge . The orb lights up once more , leaving Picard believing he is once again at the Battle of Maxia . On the Enterprise , Lt. Tasha Yar ( Denise Crosby ) and Lt. Worf ( Michael Dorn ) discover the orb brought over from the Stargazer in Picard 's chest . They take it to Riker as the Stargazer powers up its weapon systems . Riker hails the Ferengi vessel and speaks to Kazago , who is suspicious at the sight of the orb , which is a banned device . He promises to investigate .

Riker subsequently hails the Stargazer but Picard continues to believe he is being attacked by the

Enterprise . Knowing the Picard Maneuver is coming , Riker asks Data to devise a counter . Picard jumps the Stargazer to warp , executing the Picard Maneuver . Data , expecting the move , uses the Enterprise 's tractor beam to seize the real Stargazer and limit its field of fire . Riker tells Picard about the orb ; Picard seems to understand and fires his phaser at the orb , causing it to explode . After a few moments , Picard hails the Enterprise and requests a transport . Kazago hails Riker to inform him that Bok has been relieved of command " for engaging in this unprofitable venture " .

= = Production = =

" The Battle " marked the second appearance of the Ferengi , but executive producer Rick Berman thought that they still didn 't make a decent major adversary . Larry Forester 's script , his second for The Next Generation , originally featured several scenes on board the Ferengi ship to cast further light on their culture but they were all ultimately cut before filming . Bok would return in the seventh season episode " Bloodlines " , although the role would be recast with Lee Arenberg gaining the role instead of Frank Corsentino .

Rob Bowman used a couple of specific camera techniques for the scenes on board the Stargazer during Picard 's hallucinations . A steadicam attached to a cameraman was used to show a slight unsteadiness , and each of the Stargazer crew members were filmed individually on the bridge against a smoke background before being superimposed together . He explained , " we went dark in a lot of scenes and we did different angles and things the show hadn 't done yet . For me , it was a real creative stretch and it felt great for the show . " The bridge itself was a re @-@ dress of the film @-@ era Klingon Bird of Prey bridge . The term " Picard Maneuver " was later used offscreen to refer informally to Patrick Stewart 's habit of tugging his uniform shirt down , and the Battle of Maxia itself was described in the first chapter of the pre @-@ TNG era novel The Buried Age .

The Constellation @-@ class starship first appears in " Encounter at Farpoint " as a desktop model in Picard 's ready room . Rick Sternbach constructed the model by kitbashing Ertl kits of the movie Enterprise , using parts from other models such as the VF @-@ 1 Valkyrie to add detail . Greg Jein used Sternbach 's and Andrew Probert 's designs to create the four @-@ foot shooting model of the USS Stargazer for " The Battle " . In the original script , the Stargazer was to be a redress of the movie @-@ era Constitution @-@ class Enterprise model that first appeared in Star Trek : The Motion Picture ; Probert and Sternbach persuaded the producers not to reuse the movie Enterprise model , and the " Constellation " -class label was chosen so that it could match LeVar Burton 's lip movement to redub dialogue .

= = Reception = =

" The Battle " aired in broadcast syndication during the week commencing November 15 , 1987 . It received Nielsen ratings of 10 @.@ 5 , reflecting the percentage of all households watching the episode during its timeslot . This rating was lower than those received by the episodes broadcast both before and afterwards . Staff writer Maurice Hurley later said that the episode was " pretty good " because of the performance of Patrick Stewart . He originally didn 't think much of the episode as it included the Ferengi , who he felt didn 't work as an adversary at all .

Several reviewers re @-@ watched the episode after the end of the series . Zack Handlen reviewed the episode for The A.V. Club in April , 2010 . He thought that the Ferengi were a " one note " opponent for the crew , but that in this episode they weren 't as bad as they were in " The Last Outpost " . He thought that the plot made the crew look a little silly , saying " Put it this way : if somebody showed up at your door and said , " Hey , we want to give you this weapon you used to murder a bunch of guys we knew years ago , " wouldn 't you be a little suspicious ? " He gave the episode an overall mark of C + . James Hunt reviewed the episode for the website " Den of Geek " in November 2012 , and said that it was the best episode of the series up until that point . He thought that little touches such as the Stargazer using the movie @-@ era effect for warp drive was a cute touch as it was meant to be an older ship than the Enterprise but also pointed out that " it also means that the Picard Manoeuvre is completely invalidated , because you literally see the ship move

from point A to B before the original disappears " . He felt that the conflict between Picard and Bok was well realised , and that the characterisation was good .

Keith DeCandido re @-@ watched the episode for Tor.com in June 2012 , saying that it was a solid episode and that Patrick Stewart did " a stellar job , modulating from pained to confused to nostalgic to frustrated to crazy , all quite convincingly . " He said that the downside of the episode was that Troi and Wesley Crusher were not well used , while the revelation of the orb so early in the episode prevented any suspense being built up . He said that the episode worked because it concentrated on Picard , and gave it a score of six out of ten . Jamahl Epsicokhan at his website " Jammer 's Reviews " gave the episode two and a half out of four , saying that it was slow paced but that the storyline had a " psychological component that 's sometimes effective " . Cast member Wil Wheaton watched " The Battle " for AOL TV in February 2007 . He felt that the plot had similar themes to Star Trek II : The Wrath of Khan , in that a father sought revenge following the death of his son . He thought that the writing was weak overall , and that the episode purely worked because of the ability of Patrick Stewart as Captain Picard .

= = Home media release = =

The first home media release of " The Battle " was on VHS cassette was on July 1 , 1992 in the United States and Canada . The episode was later included on the Star Trek : The Next Generation season one DVD box set , released in March 2002 , and was released as part of the season one Blu @-@ ray set on July 24 , 2012 .