

= Yesterday 's Enterprise =

" Yesterday 's Enterprise " is the 63rd episode of the television series Star Trek : The Next Generation . It was the 15th episode of the third season . The episode first aired in syndication the week of February 19 , 1990 . In the plot , the crew of the USS Enterprise @-@ D must decide whether to send the time @-@ travelling Enterprise @-@ C back through a temporal rift to its certain destruction in order to prevent their own disastrous timeline from ever occurring .

The plot for " Yesterday 's Enterprise " came from the uniting of two story ideas ; one which featured the crew of the time @-@ travelling Enterprise @-@ C , and another episode which featured the return of Denise Crosby , whose character had been killed in the show 's first season . Trent Christopher Ganino and Eric A. Stillwell rewrote the story to more prominently feature the character of Guinan , and the script was completed by a team of five writers .

Filming of the episode lasted a week ; some planned elements , including death scenes for many of the characters , were either too time @-@ intensive or costly to film . In syndication , " Yesterday 's Enterprise " outperformed most of the third season 's episodes with a 13 @.@ 1 ranking , the third @-@ highest number for the series at the time . The episode is cited as a favorite by members of the cast and by reviewers .

In December 2015 , writer / director Quentin Tarantino cited this episode as one he feels could be expanded into a feature film ( on Podcast " The Nerdist " hosted by Chris Hardwick on December 18 , 2015 ) .

= = Plot = =

The Enterprise @-@ D encounters a rift in space @-@ time while on a routine mission . As they monitor the anomaly , the heavily damaged USS Enterprise @-@ C , a ship believed destroyed more than two decades earlier , emerges . Instantly , the Enterprise @-@ D undergoes a sudden and radical change : it is now a warship and the Federation is at war with the Klingons . Neither Worf nor Counselor Troi are seen or referred to , and Tasha Yar runs the tactical station . None of the crew notice the change , but Guinan senses that reality has changed , and has a meeting with Captain Picard . She says , for example , that there are supposed to be children on the ship , which of course is completely impractical on a warship . She suggests that the Enterprise @-@ C does not belong in their time and should return to the past . Picard , who knows that this would be a suicide mission , refuses to give such an order on Guinan 's intuition alone .

Captain Rachel Garrett of the Enterprise @-@ C and her crew learn they have travelled into the future . Garrett explains that they were responding to a distress call from the Klingon outpost on Narendra III , and were attacked by Romulan warbirds . While the crew works to repair the Enterprise @-@ C and tend to the crew 's injuries , Picard and his command staff discuss whether or not the ship should return to the past . Riker argues that their deaths would be meaningless , but Data suggests that it would be considered an honorable act by the Klingons . Picard discusses the situation with Garrett , who tells him that her crew will serve the Federation in the present . Picard quietly reveals to her that the Federation is on the verge of defeat and the presence of one ship will make no difference , but if the Enterprise @-@ C were to return to the past they might prevent the war from ever starting . Garrett agrees and announces to her crew that they will return through the anomaly , but at that moment , the two ships are ambushed by a Klingon Bird of Prey . Garrett is killed , and her helmsman , Richard Castillo , takes command .

During the repair efforts , Yar has become close to Castillo , but is unnerved by tense interactions with Guinan . Guinan reveals to Yar that she knows that Yar dies a meaningless death in the alternate timeline , and the two never should have met . Yar requests a transfer to the Enterprise @-@ C based on Guinan 's advice , to which Picard agrees .

As the Enterprise @-@ C prepares to return through the anomaly , three Klingon battlecruisers attack . With the anomaly becoming unstable , Picard orders the Enterprise @-@ D to cover the Enterprise @-@ C 's withdrawal . The Enterprise @-@ D suffers major crew losses under the Klingon barrage , including the death of Commander Riker , forcing Picard to man tactical himself .

With the Enterprise @-@ D on the brink of destruction , the Enterprise @-@ C traverses the anomaly .

In the restored timeline , Guinan , still subtly aware of these events , asks La Forge to tell her more about Yar .

= = Production = =

= = = Development = = =

At the beginning of Star Trek : The Next Generation 's third season , Michael Piller became the series ' head writer . Among the changes he implemented was to open the submission process for stories to non @-@ professional writers , or those not represented by agents ; though the studio resisted the effort , The Next Generation became the first show in Hollywood to allow such writers to submit their scripts . As soon as word got out , the studio was swamped with scripts ? more than 5 @ , @ 000 would arrive in a single year .

Among the scripts submitted by freelance or aspiring writers was one by Trent Christopher Ganino . Ganino completed a third draft of his speculative script in April 1989 and submitted it to the office of pre @-@ production associate Eric A. Stillwell . Ganino 's script , titled " Yesterday 's Enterprise " , ran 106 pages , far longer than the usual 65 @-@ page submission guideline , but a special allowance was made since the script was double @-@ spaced . The story involved the Enterprise @-@ D 's response to a crisis in the Golecian sector and the discovery of the Enterprise @-@ C , which had been destroyed 18 years before . The crew of the Enterprise @-@ C is in awe of the newer ship 's technology , but Picard is confronted with revealing to their guests their ultimate fate . An Enterprise @-@ C ensign accidentally discovers the fate of his vessel and panics ; Worf and Riker must capture him after he attempts to escape . When Golecian warships attack , Picard defends the Enterprise @-@ C using the same maneuver that caused the vessel 's destruction in the past . The ensign is hypnotized and returned to his ship , which returns to the past to its certain destruction .

Due to the backlog of scripts , processing all the drafts could take anywhere from weeks to a year . Ganino 's script was " logged " on May 2 and first read later that month by Richard Manning , a co @-@ producer on the writing staff . Manning commented that the draft was " not horrible , not particularly original , but good in spots , lousy in others " ; while not the review Ganino had hoped for , it was enough to keep the script in circulation .

Meanwhile , Ganino and Stillwell had struck up a friendship and began to develop ideas for other episodes . Gene Roddenberry had distributed a memo that suggested that though it would be unlikely to feature Leonard Nimoy as Spock on the series due to financial considerations , he suggested a reasonable alternative would be to feature Mark Lenard , who played Spock 's father , Sarek . Stillwell also met Denise Crosby , who had played Tasha Yar in the show 's first season , at a 1989 fan convention in San Jose . Over dinner , Crosby admitted she missed being part of the show and suggested that Stillwell could write a script to bring back her character , who had been killed off in the episode " Skin of Evil " . Ganino and Stillwell began to work on script ideas that would involve both Yar and Sarek .

In the meantime , executive story editor Melinda Snodgrass read Ganino 's spec script for " Yesterday 's Enterprise " in June and attached a post @-@ it note that declared that the story was an " interesting idea " . A " coverage " of the script , which outlined the plot and provided creative feedback , was written in August . The coverage 's analysis called the script a " good effort by an unrepresented writer " , and considered the script 's weak characterization and plot issues correctable . The main issue was whether the producers wanted to do a show with time travel .

Ganino and Stillwell were particular fans of two episodes from the original Star Trek series , " Mirror , Mirror " and " The City on the Edge of Forever " , and wanted to combine elements from them for a Next Generation episode . The foundation of their episode involved a team of Vulcans investigating the Guardian of Forever . In the past , the founder of modern Vulcan logic , Surak , is killed , causing

massive changes to the timeline . The Romulans and Vulcans joined forces to attack the Federation ; Worf is no longer a crewmember on the Enterprise and Tasha Yar remains alive . Sarek and the Vulcans on the surface are the only people not affected by the timeline change , and in the end Sarek returns to the past to take Surak 's place and restore the timeline . Satisfied with the story , the writers decided to pitch the idea to Piller .

Piller read " Yesterday 's Enterprise " and suggested to producer Rick Berman that the story , not the script , be bought from Ganino . In a meeting , Piller told Ganino that he wanted to make changes to the story , which included the addition of Tasha Yar . Fearing that what they considered a better story was to be lost if the changes to " Yesterday 's Enterprise " were undertaken , Stillwell talked to Piller and pitched their Guardian of Forever story . While intrigued by elements , Piller felt the use of the Guardian was a " gimmick " and wanted The Next Generation to stand on its own . Instead , Piller suggested that they merge the two stories , with Stillwell and Ganino to share a writing credit . In meetings with the writers , Piller suggested that the Enterprise crew immediately undergo changes due to the presence of the older Enterprise , and that Guinan be integral to the realization that something was wrong . Ganino and Stillwell were ultimately given two weeks to complete their new story .

= = = Writing = = =

Ganino and Stillwell managed to complete their new combined story in slightly over a week ; the two writers spent hours each day at Stillwell 's apartment working over every detail . They were under pressure to write a story Piller would find acceptable , as they wanted to have the opportunity to write the teleplay . The story treatment was turned in on October 10 . Piller immediately decided to purchase the story , and distributed the treatment to the writing staff while he discussed changes . Piller felt Data 's romantic feelings for Tasha Yar were over @-@ the @-@ top , and that the alien probe that served as a central part of the story felt like a cheat in terms of resolving Picard 's dilemma . The writer wanted Ganino and Stillwell to beef up Guinan 's role and find another character arc for Tasha Yar . A revised treatment was submitted on October 29 , which incorporated Piller 's changes , but the writers learned that they would not be involved in development of the teleplay ; each was paid the Writers Guild minimum of \$ 2400 .

Meanwhile , production of the episode was moved up from January 1990 to December 1989 , as this was the only time both Crosby and Whoopi Goldberg would be available for filming . The task of writing and polishing the new treatment in half the time fell upon writer Ronald D. Moore , who submitted his first draft on November 9 . Moore 's script made the alternate universe militaristic , with the Federation at war with the Klingons , and the alien probe was removed . The writing staff sat down in mid @-@ November to " break " the story , and turn the treatment into a rough script outline . Some characters , such as Troi , appeared only briefly at the beginning of the episode in order to offer more screen time to the guest characters of Guinan , Yar , Garrett , and Castillo . The beat sheet for the episode , which detailed characters and scenes , was distributed on November 27 .

Because of the lack of time before production needed to start , a team of writers was assigned to the task of writing the teleplay . In addition to the story credit to Ganino and Stillwell , Moore , Ira Steven Behr , Hans Beimler and Richard Manning would work on the teleplay with Piller to provide a final polish ? a total of seven writers . Some of the staff were convinced that with so many writers , the script would be a disaster . Because the Writers Guild would not allow more than three staff writers to appear in the credits ( four after a special waiver was granted ) , Piller agreed not to feature his name in the credits . A partial first draft was turned in on November 30 so that preproduction for the episode could commence . The altered timeline provided the chance to show the Enterprise crew in a much more dramatic and human light than would be allowable in a normal episode ; since the original timeline was to be restored , Behr explained , the writers had the freedom to include more action . " Even though it was an alternate universe , [ Moore ] and I got all excited because we realized we were going to kill everyone on screen ! " he said . Michael Okuda and Rick Sternbach submitted technical memos on what kind of anomaly might drag the Enterprise

@-@ C through time , and suggested interstellar , super @-@ dense strings as a possibility . The first draft teleplay was completed by December 4 , and a preproduction meeting was held the same day ; the various departments argued over costs and what items could be cut to reduce the budget . The final draft was finished and turned in on December 8 .

= = = Design = = =

After everyone had read the script , the studio decided to spend a little more on the episode than average ( at that time , Daily Variety estimated an average cost of \$ 1 @. @ 2 million . ) This gave the production departments added liberties beyond what had been expected in the script . Among the reasons for the increase in budget was that " Yesterday 's Enterprise " would air during February sweeps , an important time for the studio to attract solid ratings . As The Next Generation was syndicated directly by the studio , the episode 's performance would impact advertising revenue for the future .

The script called for the creation of the Enterprise @-@ C. In the first season , illustrator Andrew Probert , who had designed the Enterprise @-@ D , was interested in a display of the design lineage of the ship from James T. Kirk 's Enterprises to The Next Generation 's much larger ship ( realized as a wall relief in the conference lounge behind the command bridge ) . Like most others , Probert assumed that the Enterprise @-@ B was an Excelsior @-@ class vessel and reasoned that the C would share design elements with its Excelsior @-@ class predecessor and its Galaxy @-@ class successor , Picard 's ship . The artist also produced a small color sketch of his version of Enterprise @-@ C , but left at the end of the season ; with his absence , no one knew what the drawing was intended to be .

When Rick Sternbach took over Probert 's duties , he believed the sketch was a rejected concept for the Enterprise @-@ D , but the ship 's design stayed with him . When he learned about the ship requirement for " Yesterday 's Enterprise " , he followed a thought process similar to Probert and built off the old sketch . Probert 's version had a highly curved engineering hull reminiscent of a sailing ship , but Sternbach was worried a design with so many compound curves would prove difficult to fabricate in the available time , so he made the hull entirely circular . A set of orthographic views was created and sent to Greg Jein , who fabricated the shooting model ; the model cost more than \$ 10 @, @ 000 to produce .

The crew took several steps to differentiate the alternate universe from the original one . A " military log " is substituted for a captain 's log , " combat date " rather than stardate , and the absence of a counselor . The expanded budget allowed the bridge to be entirely redressed , something that would normally be infeasible . Steps replaced the bridge 's ramps , and the captain 's chair was elevated and made more throne @-@ like . Longer , more military @-@ looking tables were substituted for the usual decor in the Ten @-@ Forward lounge . While enlisted crew aboard the darker Enterprise wore variations of the Season 1 ? 2 uniforms , the senior officers wore slightly modified versions of the uniforms added that season . The Enterprise @-@ C officers wore feature film costumes due to the expense and time @-@ consuming nature of creating more than a half @-@ dozen or so new uniforms for the episode . Costume designer Robert Blackman 's solution to change their appearance was to remove the turtleneck collars underneath the red tunics , as well as the belts , although the rear belt loop remained .

= = = Filming and casting = = =

Filming began on Monday , December 11 , 1989 and lasted for seven days . The episode was directed by David Carson , who had only helmed one other episode before " Yesterday 's Enterprise " was shot . Carson felt that his relative lack of experience helped because he had no preconceptions about how things should be done . Since much of the episode took place in the darker alternate universe , Carson wanted to emphasize the effect decades of war had on the crew and the bridge . " Picard really looked tired and worn and like a battle @-@ weary commander , and that 's what we wanted the bridge to look like--a battle weary bridge . I had lots of thoughts about

making it as strong as possible using a lot of low lights , a lot of dark blues , making it very much more moody , " he said . In order to heighten the impact of the physical set changes , Carson took a different approach to how he constructed shots . " It was my intention to make it as much like a submarine as possible and to use low @-@ angle lighting ; basically , to do everything the opposite way that the Enterprise was normally shot . " The cameras were equipped with longer lenses than usual in order to reduce the depth of the scenes and provide a grittier feel . The use of low angles forced the lighting to be modified in order to prevent the scene from looking " like a hotel lobby " , in Carson 's words .

Two new roles needed to be filled for the production : Garrett and Castillo . The actors selected were both Star Trek fans . Christopher McDonald was picked for Castillo . " What impressed me about [ McDonald ] , " Carson remembers , " was that he wasn 't just your romantic leading man ; he was actually a very impressive actor . " Tricia O 'Neil was cast for similar reasons ; the actress was not the normal Star Trek commander type . Carson was also pleased to work with Crosby and Goldberg . The main cast enjoyed the opportunity to play their characters differently . The result was an unusual degree of friction between characters . This provoked some concern with the producers ; Berman was afraid that the episode was pushing the timeline too far .

Ganino and Stillwell visited the set frequently during filming . Members of the main cast approached Stillwell with questions about the nature of the altered universe and if they were still the same character . Goldberg asked Ganino about changing a piece of dialogue on set ; since Ganino was not the author of the teleplay , he deferred to Stillwell , who notified the production office . When Berman found out that Ganino and Stillwell were on set and talking to the actors , he banned them from setting foot on the sets again . Due to time constraints many planned elements were never filmed ; Moore had hoped for an extended battle scene in which Data would be electrocuted , and Wesley blown up in an explosion . Production of the episode wrapped on December 19 .

= = Release and reception = =

" Yesterday 's Enterprise " was first broadcast the week of February 19 , 1990 . Because The Next Generation aired in syndication , " Yesterday 's Enterprise " did not air on a specific day or time slot . The episode received a 13 @.@ 1 rating for the time period from February 19 to March 4 ? the third highest rating for the series , and the highest for the entire season . While the season had averaged 9 @.@ 817 @.@ 000 households , " Yesterday 's Enterprise " attracted 12 @.@ 070 @.@ 000 households . The episode ranked first in Entertainment Weekly 's list of top 10 Star Trek : The Next Generation episodes .

Screenwriters John Logan and Roberto Orci , writers for the 2002 film Star Trek : Nemesis and the 2009 reboot Star Trek , respectively , cite " Yesterday 's Enterprise " as one of their favorite episodes and influences .

" Yesterday 's Enterprise " was also included as one of four episodes ( along with " The Best of Both Worlds , Parts I and II " and " The Measure of a Man " ) in a DVD collection entitled " The Best of Star Trek : The Next Generation " . Critic Marc Bernardin described the episode as Star Trek 's " smartest time @-@ travel experiment " and a fan favorite . The Toronto Star listed The Next Generation 's time @-@ shifting episodes , including " Yesterday 's Enterprise " as one of the twenty best elements of the show .

" Yesterday 's Enterprise " was the third most popular episode of Star Trek : The Next Generation according to an April 2013 poll issued by startrek.com. The two most popular episodes were " The Best of Both Worlds " and " The Inner Light " .