

Force of Nature (episode)

Real World article(written from a Production point of view)

Investigating the disappearance of several ships, the Enterprise discovers two scientists who claim that warp drive is destructive to the fabric of subspace.

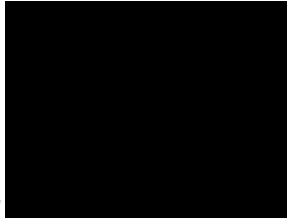
Summary

Teaser

Lieutenant Commander Data arrives at Geordi La Forge's quarters to take back Spot after La Forge borrowed her temporarily to experience having a pet cat before getting one for himself — a wise precaution, as La Forge found that he was nowhere near ready for a cat as yet. Spot had completely ruined his quarters and furniture during her stay. They discuss training Spot in order to rid her of her somewhat reckless behavior, but the discussion is interrupted when Commander Riker (on the intercom) calls all senior staff to the observation lounge for a mission briefing in ten minutes. Before leaving, they try to make an attempt to get her out from under La Forge's bed, only to have Spot destroy more items in La Forge's quarters. "Training, definitely", he tells Data.

Act One

"Captain's log, Stardate 47310.2. We are investigating the disappearance of the medical transport Fleming somewhere in the Hekaras Corridor.



Our search is complicated by the unique properties of this particular region of space."

Data briefs the senior staff on the Hekaras Corridor

All of the senior staff are present in the observation lounge while Riker is briefing them about the disappearance of the USS Fleming, a medical transport vessel that had not been in contact with Starfleet for four days. Data continues the briefing describing the hazardous nature of the space surrounding the Hekaras Corridor due to the abnormally intense tetryon fields surrounding the corridor. The corridor itself is free of the fields and ships traveling at warp speed could only travel safely through the corridor in this particular region of space. Captain Picard asks how long it will take to perform a level-one search of the region, and Data replies saying that it will take at least two days (much longer than normal) because the corridor is twelve light years in length and the interference from the tetryon fields severely limits the sensor range.

Lieutenant Worf suggests using reconnaissance probes to supplement the sensors but La Forge says that they would make little difference as communication with the probes would be extremely difficult to maintain – the only viable solution would be to increase the efficiency of the sensors. Counselor Troi suggests contacting the inhabitants of Hekaras II, wondering if they had any contact with the Fleming. Riker states that he had already contacted the Hekaran government; they've had no contact with the Fleming, but they did say that in the past week, only one vessel had traveled through the corridor – a Ferengi trader. Because the Fleming's inventory included a supply of rare and valuable bio-mimetic gel, Dr. Crusher suggests the possibility that the Ferengi may have hijacked the ship or stolen the supply of the gel and destroyed the Fleming. Riker believes they should not discount that possibility and Picard agrees. He orders Worf to initiate a search pattern for the Fleming as the Enterprise heads into the corridor.

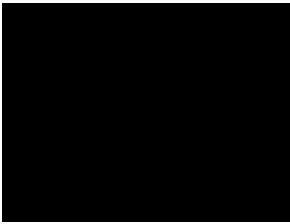
Sometime later, La Forge is in main engineering performing maintenance on the dilithium chamber hoping to improve the efficiency of the warp engines. Data enters and reports to La Forge that there has been a small drop in the efficiency of the sensors and Commander Riker wants them to examine the phase buffers. La Forge says that he will assist Data in a moment and orders Hansen to transfer an EPS conduit through the stabilizer matrix as he closes the dilithium chamber and moves to over to the master systems display table. Data is curious about why La Forge is working on the warp engines, asking if something is wrong with them. La Forge replies in the negative, but Data asks why he is having the EPS conduit stabilized. La Forge says that he wants a slightly higher power conversion level even though it will not affect the engines in any way. When Data questions his motives further, he reluctantly reveals that he has been in contact with Commander Donald Kaplan, the chief engineer of the USS Intrepid and a former Starfleet Academy classmate of La Forge's. Kaplan reported the power conversion level of the Intrepid's engines was slightly higher than those on the Enterprise, which prompted La Forge to improve those on the Enterprise. Data assumes that La Forge is in competition with Kaplan, but La Forge will not admit it, saying that the Enterprise should be better than any ship in Starfleet in all respects as it is the flagship. Eventually, he concedes that it is a matter of personal pride. When the computer reports that there has been no change in the power conversion levels, La Forge is frustrated but is unable to refuse Data and they go to work on the sensors.

Data and La Forge are traveling through a Jefferies tube until they arrive at a junction where La Forge works on a phase buffer, hoping to improve the sensor efficiency. There is an increase, but it is not as high as La Forge had anticipated, suggesting that one of the stages in the sensor system is out of alignment. The pair proceed to another junction and en route, Data continues the discussion about training Spot, noting that his instruction has been "largely unsuccessful". La Forge cracks a joke saying that using a phaser on stun should do the trick, although Data does not recognize the humor. Data and La Forge pass up another junction and find that one of the phase buffers in the third junction is out of alignment. Repairs fix

the alignment, but sensor efficiency has only increased marginally. Just then, Riker calls Data on the intercom and informs him that a starship has been located on the long-range sensors and asks that he and La Forge report to the bridge. La Forge tells Data that nothing more can be done to improve the efficiency of the sensors and they acknowledge Riker's order and make their way to the bridge.

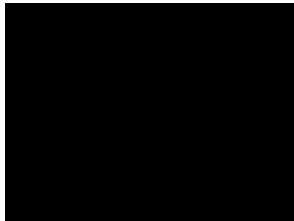
On the bridge, Worf reports that the Enterprise is now within visual range of the starship. When put on the viewscreen, a Ferengi vessel is shown – the same one that passed through the Hekaras Corridor a week ago. Data and La Forge arrive on the bridge; Data takes over for the operations officer and La Forge mans the aft engineering console. La Forge reports that there are no emissions coming from the vessel's plasma vents, suggesting that its warp drive is completely inactive. Data confirms this, adding that the impulse engines are also offline and that power levels in general are low. Life support is functioning and approximately four-hundred-and-fifty Ferengi life signs are detected on board the ship. The crew is briefly puzzled; Picard orders Worf to open hailing frequencies but the hail goes unanswered. La Forge reports a lack of subspace emissions, suggesting that the field coils have been completely overloaded and explaining the Ferengi communications blackout and power loss. Since the Ferengi vessel's sensors are still functioning, he believes that using delta waves emitted from a deflector array could be modulated with a com signal, which the Ferengi ship could pick up. Picard proceeds with La Forge's suggestion and as a precautionary measure, orders for the tractor beams as the Enterprise moves to transporter range. Suddenly, Worf detects rising power levels from the Ferengi vessel. The Ferengi lock weapons and Riker quickly orders for the shields to be raised just before the Ferengi weapons fire hits the Enterprise.

Act Two



"I see no reason to trust you, Human." "In that case, we'll be on our way."

The Enterprise is hit by a second blast of weapons fire from the Ferengi vessel. Picard and Riker order for phasers, targeting the Ferengi weapons array only. The Ferengi ship is quickly disabled, and the Enterprise sustains only minimal damage to Decks 5 and 7. The Ferengi vessel's power levels quickly stabilize and their impulse engines come back on-line. Riker realizes that they were merely playing dead, waiting for the Enterprise to come in closer. Picard is curious why the Ferengi would attack his ship in the first place and opens a channel to the Ferengi ship via La Forge's jury-rigged link. The Ferengi DaiMon Prak, appears through static and Picard asks why the Enterprise was attacked. In turn, Prak is outraged, accusing the Enterprise of aggression which led to his ship becoming disabled. Picard and Riker are confused about Prak's accusation and tell Prak the Enterprise was merely ascertaining the status of Prak's disabled vessel. Prak is skeptical about Picard's motives and threatens that the Enterprise's "attack" is an act of war but Picard insists that there has been a misunderstanding and suggests that Prak come aboard the Enterprise to discuss the situation. Prak sees no reason to trust Picard but the captain is determined to investigate what happened to the Ferengi ship, as it may have a connection to the disappearance of the Fleming. After Picard tells Prak that the Enterprise will leave Prak's ship stranded within the Fere



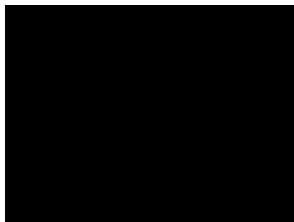
"Spot? Spot? Spot, down. Spot, down. Down."

In his quarters, Data is still trying to train Spot as La Forge comes in, but his attempts to get Spot off his desk are unsuccessful and he admits that it may not be possible to train her, as she may lack the necessary intelligence to respond to his commands. La Forge tells Data that he may have found another way to improve the power conversion levels of the warp engines. In main engineering, La Forge asks Data to keep the EPS flow constant while he modulates the flow of the power taps. Data informs La Forge that the procedure will only increase the conversion level by 0.8%, but La Forge knows this and that this marginal increase may be enough – Kaplan sent La Forge a subspace message saying that the Intrepid's power conversion levels are at 97.1%. After completing their work, the computer reports that the power conversion levels of the Enterprise are now at 97.2%, and La Forge is finally satisfied with "winning" his competition with Commander Kaplan.

"Captain's log, supplemental. We have traced the Fleming's most likely course. It now appears that the vessel may have come to an unfortunate end."

The Enterprise has approached a large field of debris. Picard and Data are studying the debris field on a monitor on one of the science stations on the bridge and although the origin of the field is unknown it is possible that the debris could be the remains of the Fleming because the debris consists mostly of duranium and poly-composite fragments (materials used in starship construction) and because the debris field contains enough mass to account for the Fleming. Picard has Ensign Gates take the Enterprise through the debris field to see if the Fleming can be positively identified. During the investigation, Data picks up a small, metallic object on the sensors. Riker guesses that it could be either a probe casing or some sort of a log recorder but Data doubts Riker's guesses as an unusual signal is being emitted from the object. Data's tone then changes as he realizes from his console that the object is beginning to generate a verteron field. Picard immediately orders for shields to be raised and for a full reverse but it is too late as a bright light fills the bridge and as the light disappears, the lights on the bridge dim and several of the consoles are now dark. A damage report reveals that the warp drive has been disabled as have the shields and all other subspace systems – the Enterprise has now fallen to the same fate as the Ferengi ship. An unidentified vessel now approaches the Enterprise with two lifeforms aboard and the transporters of the vessel are initiated. All attempts to raise the shields fail and red alert is raised when the Enterprise is boarded. There is a brief moment of tension as the crew does not know where the crew of the unidentified ship are going to materialize, and the moment is broken when Data announces an intruder alert. La Forge, on the intercom, calls the bridge informing Picard that there are intruders in main engineering. Two humanoids (one male and one female) are standing in front of the now inactive warp core. La Forge asks them what they want and the male, Rabal, says that he only wants them to listen and the female, Serova his sister, says that they're killing them.

Act Three



The Enterprise is boarded

Picard, Riker, Data, La Forge, and two security guards are present with Rabal and Serova in the observation lounge. Picard wants a full explanation of their accusation due to its seriousness. Rabal, the seemingly more reasonable of the two, claims that his and Serova's research shows that warp fields are slowly damaging their region of space and that their homeworld (they are Hekarans, the inhabitants of Hekaras II) will one day be rendered uninhabitable if nothing is done to prevent the damage that they claim is being caused. Picard briefly considers what the scientists have just said, but La Forge openly shows his skepticism as he has already heard of their theories – the Federation Science Council reviewed their research several years before but dismissed it for lacking evidence. Serova explains that was because the research was only preliminary, and their original analysis was incomplete. Picard appreciates their situation but cares little for their methods in getting the Federation's attention and suggests placing a request to the Council for further research, but neither are interested in the bureaucracy that would ensue and feel that their method would have got a faster response from the Federation. Riker asks them if that was how they justified attacking their ships, but Serova does not consider it to be an attack as neither the Enterprise nor the Ferengi vessel suffered any casualties or serious damage. Rabal also adds that they dispersed the verteron probes in the Corridor merely to disable warp-driven ships and nothing more.

Riker responds furiously at their "justification" and both scientists acknowledge that they had taken extreme measures to get the Federation's attention, but neither are going to apologize for their actions. Picard asks La Forge how long it will take to repair the warp engines but because the field coils were completely overloaded by the verteron pulse, La Forge estimates that it will take at least thirty-six hours. Serova knows exactly how the pulse disabled the warp engines and offers her assistance, which will reduce the repair time to just ten hours, but she will only assist on the condition that they review the research. Picard refuses to be forced into giving in to their demands, but due to the seriousness of their claims and the urgency of locating the Fleming, he agrees to review their research but makes it clear that his top priority is to recover the Fleming.

Furthermore, he expects Serova and Rabal to assist the engineering staff in restoring the ship's systems and to deactivate all of the remaining probes within the corridor – if they refuse, they will be placed in the brig and taken to the nearest Federation starbase where they will be charged. Serova is unwilling to back down, but Rabal agrees to help Picard but insists that he review the research. Picard then orders La Forge to work with the Hekaran scientists in the effort to restore the ship's systems, although La Forge is clearly unhappy with the idea of having to work with them.

La Forge, Serova and Rabal are working in engineering, and they restore the shields. Serova informs La Forge that the warp engines can be engaged in eight hours, but La Forge is irritated and says that even when the engines are back on-line, it will take at least a week to recalibrate them properly. Serova sarcastically apologizes for the inconvenience, saying that her concerns are more important than restoring the warp drive of the Enterprise. La Forge continues to argue with her and she soon leaves after realizing that it is of no use to continue trying to talk with him, as La Forge's mind has already been made up. Rabal asks La Forge to reconsider Serova's research, as Rabal himself was in a similar position a few years before and hopes that if he and Serova can persuade Starfleet to prohibit the use of warp drive through the corridor, they will convince the Hekarans to stop using warp drive as well, effectively isolating the Hekarans from the Federation – a sacrifice that Rabal and Serova are more than willing to make.

In stellar cartography, Data reports his findings on the research to Captain Picard, Serova and Rabal. Using a monitor, he explains that the two scientists' theory claims that there are regions of subspace instability within the corridor and that prolonged exposure of warp field energy to these regions of subspace will cause them to rupture resulting in a subspace rift. Picard compares the theory to running up and down a carpet – eventually you will wear it out – an essentially correct analogy. Picard asks Data if the theory can be proven, but Data says that there is not enough evidence to prove it as of yet. Rabal is disappointed but Data continues by saying that the only way to determine whether or not a rift would form would be to expose a region of space within the corridor to warp field energy at least a million times greater than that normally generated by most starships. Rabal says that the effect is cumulative and that each time a vessel travels at warp through the corridor, they are one step closer to a rift forming in the corridor. Data agrees with the possibility and recommends that the Science Council send a science vessel to the Corridor to hopefully resolve any further questions, but Serova is dissatisfied as further delays will be caused. Before he can respond, Picard is interrupted by Riker on the intercom reporting that they have located the Fleming on the long-range sensors. The vessel appears to be intact but its subspace systems are disabled, although its shields are functional. Picard says that they'll meet with the Fleming as soon as the warp drive is back online. Picard asks if Data, Serova and Rabal would like to gather the research together to present to the Science Council and Picard will give it his full recommendation. Data complies and Rabal gratefully thanks Picard for the opportunity, but Serova is not interested and refuses to have anything to do with the proposal as delays will still be caused.

Sometime later, La Forge returns to the bridge, reporting that the warp drive is now online, and other systems are ready. Picard orders it to be set to

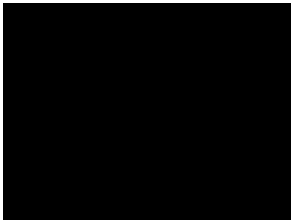
he and Data could have missed the connection between warp drive and the formation of the rift, especially as they have logged thousands of hours on the Enterprise's warp engines. He feels somewhat guilty about so readily dismissing Serova. La Forge realizes that he was taking everything personally – he looks at the warp core as something beautiful and never considered it to be so destructive. In thirty minutes, the nacelles will be fully saturated. La Forge asks Data to inform him when the process is complete and leaves engineering.

La Forge enters Ten Forward and joins Rabal, staring at the rift. La Forge feels responsible for Serova's death and the formation of the rift, but Rabal says that La Forge was not at fault. He was confident that further research would have proved the theories were right, but Serova was unwilling to wait. The two consider where they'll go from this point and La Forge has doubts about the Federation abandoning warp drive as they are so dependent on it. "It won't be easy at all", Rabal replies.

Later, they are ready. The drive will be engaged for 6.3 seconds, and a course is plotted to intercept the Fleming. La Forge initiates the warp pulse. The Enterprise jumps to warp and six seconds later, the warp drive is disengaged as the ship enters the rift, shaken by distortions. The ship is almost at the Fleming with transporters on standby when Worf warns them the ship is engaging its warp engines. Unable to warn them due to distortions, the rift becomes more violent once the engines are active. The Enterprise is shaken and the Fleming's systems start to fail. Worse, the rift has grown due to the warp drive – the Enterprise no longer has sufficient momentum to escape. More violent distortion waves begin to bombard the ship.

Act Five

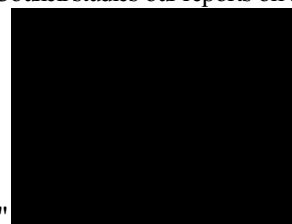
The intensity of the energy distortion waves has increased by a factor of ten, now occurring every fifty-nine seconds. The Enterprise, in range, evacuates the Fleming's crew. Because the distortion waves are both more intense and frequent, the hull stress is reaching maximum tolerance. They attempt to think of a way to get out.



The Enterprise "surfs" a distortion wave

La Forge suggests the Enterprise could clear the rift without warp engines by "surfing" the distortion waves; phase-matching the deflector shields with the EM variance of the distortion wave so they would be pulled along the wave. The next distortion wave starts to pull the ship but stops as the speed differential between the Enterprise and the wave was too great. Riker points out the hull stress is already critical and that the ship cannot take much more. Data suggests engaging impulse engines at full power to lessen the shock of the wave hitting the ship. The Enterprise is pulled along the next wave, but hull stresses are exceeding their maximum tolerance and structural integrity fields on Decks 10 through 16 are failing. La Forge struggles to keep the Enterprise in the wave, hull stresses at 120% of their maximum tolerance. As the Enterprise approaches its demise, the ship breaks from the wave and is thrown clear from the rift. Hull stress returns to normal.

"Captain's log, Stardate 47314.5. We have been continuing our research, while the Federation Council studies our reports on the subspace rift. It



now appears certain that what we've seen here will have repercussions for many years to come."

Rabal delivers a grim report

All the senior staff are present in the observation lounge where La Forge and Rabal give their report. Scans of the sector have shown several more subspace instabilities and if they are exposed to warp field energy, they too will create other subspace rifts. Rabal displays the probable locations where subspace rifts will form over the next forty years based on current warp drive patterns. Subspace rifts will occupy nearly all of the sector. Picard reads out new directives from the Federation Council on a PADD given to him by Ensign Armstrong:

"Until we can find a way to counteract the warp field effect, the Council feels our best course is to slow the damage as much as possible. Therefore, areas of space found susceptible to warp fields will be restricted to essential travel only, and effective immediately, all Federation vessels will be limited to a speed of – Warp 5? – except in cases of extreme emergency."

Worf reports the Klingons will observe the restrictions but the Romulans will not, and Troi wonders if others will observe them like the Ferengi or the Cardassians but the Federation will inform all warp-capable species regardless and hope they realize it is in their best interests to take similar action. Crusher knows the warp speed limitations will prevent further rifts from forming but asks what will be done with the one that has formed. Unfortunately, there is nothing that can be done at the moment and although Hekaras II is not in immediate danger, gravitational shifts caused by the rift have already begun to affect the planet, changing its climate. Picard informs Rabal that the Federation will be setting up a weather control matrix for Hekaras II that will suffice for now, although it will only work on a short-term basis. As the seriousness of the problem sinks in, Picard

dismisses the staff while La Forge remains. Picard can't help but feel that through his forty-three years as a Starfleet officer exploring the galaxy, he was helping destroy the one thing that he held most dear, space and the races within it. La Forge confidently replies that it won't end that way and there's still time to repair the damage the warp engines had done.

Memorable quotes

"Why is Spot under the bed?" "Probably because she knows if I catch her, I'm going to kill her."

- Data to La Forge while he looks after Spot

"Half the time, I didn't know if she was going to lick me or scratch my face off."

- La Forge, on Spot

"Training... definitely."

- La Forge, to Data after Spot damages his quarters further

"It is part of our job to retain an open mind."

- Picard

"How about a phaser? A low stun setting at just the right moment might do the trick..." "Geordi, I cannot stun my cat."

- La Forge and Data, on training Spot

"Hey, hey, don't you spit at me!"

- Geordi La Forge, to Spot

"What did she train her cat to do?" "She had that cat jumping into her arm on command." "Interesting... perhaps I could modify your sister's techniques to keep Spot from jumping on the console. Do you know how she was able to train her cat?" "Well, as I recall, she walked around for two months with a piece of tuna in her blouse." (Impressed) "Mph!"

- La Forge and Data, on training cats

"This is down. Down is good. This is up. Up is no."

- Data, attempting to train Spot

"This is the flagship. We should be better than everybody else."

- La Forge

"There's nothing wrong with a little friendly rivalry."

- La Forge

"Too bad, Mister Kaplan."

- La Forge, after getting a higher power conversion rate than Commander Kaplan

"There's no point in trying to talk to you. You've already decided not to listen."

- Serova, in response to La Forge

"They wanted proof. I'm going to give it to them... I'm sorry..."

- Serova, before causing a warp core breach, killing herself, to prove that warp fields can cause subspace rifts

"You know, Geordi, I spent the better part of my life exploring space. I've charted new worlds, I've met dozens of new species, and I believe that these were all valuable ends in themselves. Now it seems that... all this while, I was... helping to damage the thing that I hold most dear." "It won't turn out that way, Captain. We still have time to make it better."

- Picard and La Forge

Background information

Production history

- Final draft script: 17 September 1993 [1]
- Vortex scene filmed at Image G: 10 June 1993. ("Departmental Briefing Year Five" ("Shooting Elements"), TNG Season 5 DVD special feature)
- Premiere airdate: 15 November 1993
- First UK airdate: 6 March 1996

Story and production



Director Robert Lederman with the guest actors on set

- The episode derived from a premise Joe Menosky had created back in the sixth season, known as "Limits". Menosky's allegory for modern day environmental problems was dropped as an element from several episodes that season, including "Suspicions". (Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion (? ed., p. ?))
- Jeri Taylor recalled, "This was a troubled episode from the first... We had tried it in many guises and it never worked. At the beginning of the seventh year, I sent Naren and Brannon to a big breakfast meeting of an environmental watchdog group that we have here in Hollywood and they came back inspired. Naren was so galvanized. He said, 'I want to take a crack at "Limits." I want to do this. This is important.' I agreed. It was a story I really wanted to do and I think it does make an important statement, but dramatizing a huge issue like that is always the trouble. We started down many roads. At first, we had Geordi's sister come on board to help him adjust to the death of his mother, but that seemed to muddle everything completely. We then started the whole little thread of Geordi in competition with the engineer from another ship so we could show Geordi's deeply felt belief in technology and the benefits of technology, so that he would be at war with himself when realizing that it was contributing to something disastrous.
- "When the script was written, it turned out to be very, very short and so we then started adding scenes about Data's cat. By luck, or by bad luck, all of those scenes turned out to be at the beginning of the show, so you had an episode that started very fitfully and seemed to be about Data's cat and then it took a turn and seemed to be about Geordi and his rivalry with this other guy. Then it went back to the cat and then, finally, in about the third act, the real story began and, by that point, I think people were hopelessly lost. It sort of never got back on track, but it's still an important idea and our intentions were good." (Captains' Logs: The Unauthorized Complete Trek Voyages)
- Regarding the weak link between the episode's A and B plots Shankar explained, "The slightest dramatic connection between those two is the notion that you can't control a force of nature like a cat." (Captains' Logs: The Unauthorized Complete Trek Voyages)
- Several wall displays in this episode read "RS Corridor". According to Michael Okuda, this was a mistake – the name of the Hekaras Corridor was misspelled on the graphic and then all but the last two incorrect letters were accidentally deleted. (Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion (? ed., p. ?))
- Bio-mimetic gel was coined by science consultant André Bormanis, who based it on news that Cambridge researchers had developed a material that created small tubules that could mimic certain cellular-level biological activities and structures. (Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion (? ed., p. ?))

Continuity

- This was the first Star Trek episode where the maximum warp speed limitation was imposed by the Federation on all Starfleet vessels. Further references were made to the speed limit in "The Pegasus" and "Eye of the Beholder" later in the season, but has rarely been referenced since. According to the unpublished VOY Season 1 edition of the Star Trek: Voyager Technical Guide, by Rick Sternbach and Michael Okuda, it was suggested that because of the variable geometry pylons, warp fields may no longer have a negative impact on habitable worlds as established in this episode.
- This was the first episode in which Data's cat, Spot, was referred to as "she" rather than "he". Though unexplained, the cat's change in gender went on to play a significant role in TNG: "Genesis", in which she has kittens.
- The Talarian warship studio model was reused here as the Hekaran starship.
- Data's attempts to keep training Spot from not jumping onto his desk was still unsuccessful going into 2371, as shown in Star Trek Generations.
- Although the episode does not explicitly state the warp factor, it is implied that the ship is traveling at warp 9.5, as indicated by the ship's speedometer showing a reading of 9.5. This is the highest warp factor ever achieved by the Enterprise-D, and it is notable that the ship is able to maintain this speed for an extended period of time. The episode also features a scene where the Enterprise-D is traveling at warp 9.5, and the ship's speedometer shows a reading of 9.5. This is the highest warp factor ever achieved by the Enterprise-D, and it is notable that the ship is able to maintain this speed for an extended period of time.

- Shankar regretted that the emotional arc of Geordi's sister coming aboard was dropped rather than reworked. He admitted that the finished episode was "not one of my finer moments." (Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion (? ed., p. ?))
- Braga observed, "There were preposterous moments in that show. On the other hand, we knew the risks, but we felt it was real important to at least try to do an environmental show. We struggled with making it a personal story and in the end it just didn't work as well as we wanted it to. We couldn't find a personal angle. When you limit warp drive, the rug is being pulled out from under Star Trek. I wish more time had been spent with that, and less time with Spot and cat." (Captains' Logs: The Unauthorized Complete Trek Voyages)

Video and DVD releases

- UK VHS release (two-episode tapes, CIC Video): Volume 81, 6 June 1994
- As part of the TNG Season 7 DVD collection

Links and references

Starring

- Patrick Stewart as Capt. Jean-Luc Picard
- Jonathan Frakes as Cmdr. William T. Riker

Also starring

- LeVar Burton as Lt. Cmdr. Geordi La Forge
- Michael Dorn as Lieutenant Worf
- Gates McFadden as Dr. Beverly Crusher
- Marina Sirtis as Counselor Deanna Troi
- Brent Spiner as Lt. Commander Data

Guest stars

- Michael Corbett as Rabal
- Margaret Reed as Serova
- Lee Arenberg as Prak

Co-star

- Majel Barrett as Computer Voice

Uncredited co-stars

- David Keith Anderson as Armstrong
- Lena Banks as operations division ensign
- Brandy as Spot
- Michael Braveheart as Martinez
- Bud as Spot
- David Paul Christian as Ten Forward waiter
- Debbie David as Russell
- Tracee Lee Cocco as Jae
- Fumiko Hamada as command division officer
- Rad Milo as operations division ensign
- Monster as Spot
- Michael Moorehead as science division ensign
- Joycelyn Robinson as Gates
- Oliver Theess as command division officer
- Tyler as Spot
- Unknown performers as
 - Gates (voice)
 - Hansen (voice)
 - Operations division officer

Stand-ins

- David Keith Anderson – stand-in for LeVar Burton
- Debbie David – stand-in for Brent Spiner
- Michael Echols – stand-in for Michael Dorn
- Nora Leonhardt – stand-in for Marina Sirtis

- Lorine Mendell – stand-in for Gates McFadden
- Richard Sarstedt – stand-in for Jonathan Frakes
- Dennis Tracy – stand-in for Patrick Stewart

References

21st century; 2366; 2380; 2390; 2400; 2410; ability; accusation; act of war; analogy; animal training man

mines disguised as signal buoys. These siblings contend that sustained warp drive is destroying the fabric of space near their homeworld, and will eventually destroy their planet. Data determines that the research has merit, but requires more study. Picard requests a more thorough investigation from the Federation Science Council.[4]

However, Serova is not willing to wait for any more studies. In order to prove her theory, she causes a warp breach in her ship, killing herself in the process. A rift is formed, and the Fleming becomes trapped in the damaged space. The Enterprise crew manages to find a way to "surf" through the rift without using warp drive within it by initiating a short warp jump at maximum speed, then beams up the Fleming crew and escapes by "riding" the disruption waves produced by the rift.[5]

Later, the Federation Council issues a new directive limiting all Federation vessels to a speed of warp five except in extreme emergencies. In addition, they have informed every known species capable of warp travel of the newly discovered dangers of its use. Worf asserts that the Klingon Empire will agree to the limitations, but it is uncertain whether the Romulan Star Empire, Ferengi Alliance, and Cardassian Union will also follow suit.[6]

Reception[edit]



This section needs expansion. You can help by adding to it. (July 2020)

In 2020, ScreenRant noted this as one of the top ten *Star Trek: The Next Generation* episodes with an important moral message.[7]

Releases[edit]

"Force of Nature" has been released as part of TNG Season 7 collections on DVD and Blu-Ray formats.[8] Season seven of TNG, which contains this episode was released on Blu-ray disc in January 2015.[9][10]

References[edit]

- ↑ "Force of Nature". IMDb.com. IMDb, Inc. Retrieved 20 January 2021.
- ↑ DeCandido, Keith R.A. (29 January 2013). "Star Trek: The Next Generation Rewatch: "Force of Nature"". *tor.com*. Macmillan. Retrieved 20 January 2021.
- ↑ "Force of Nature". *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. 15 November 1993. CBS.
- ↑ "Force of Nature". *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. 15 November 1993. CBS.
- ↑ "Force of Nature". *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. 15 November 1993. CBS.
- ↑ "Force of Nature". *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. 15 November 1993. CBS.
- ↑ "Star Trek: The Next Generation: 10 Most Important Episodes With A Moral Message". *ScreenRant*. 2020-02-28. Retrieved 2021-02-15.
- ↑ Staff, *TrekNews.net* (2013-02-20). "All Seven Season of Star Trek: TNG to Be Re-Released on DVD in April". *TREKNEWS.NET* | Your daily dose of Star Trek news and opinion. Retrieved 2021-02-28.
- ↑ Star Trek: The Next Generation – Season Seven – Blu-ray review January 2, 2015
- ↑ "Star Trek: The Next Generation - Season 7 Blu-ray Review | High Def Digest". *bluray.highdefdigest.com*. Retrieved 2021-02-28.

External links[edit]

- "Force of Nature" at IMDb
- Force of Nature at Memory Alpha (a Star Trek wiki)
- Force of Nature at StarTrek.com (NOTE: as of (at least) September 2019, this template – used on 706 different en.wiki articles – is broken)

"Star Trek: The Next Generation" Force of Nature (TV Episode 1993) - IMDb





















Directed by

Robert Lederman

Writing Credits

Gene Roddenberry ... (created by) Naren Shankar ... (written by) René Echevarria ... (executive story editor) Naren Shankar ... (story editor)

Cast (in credits order) complete, awaiting verification

 Patrick Stewart ... Capt. Jean-Luc Picard  Jonathan Frakes ... Cmdr. William Riker  LeVar Burton ... Lt. Cmdr. Geordi La Forge  Michael Dorn ... Lt. Worf  Gates McFadden ... Dr. Beverly Crusher  Marina Sirtis ... Counselor Deanna Troi  Brent Spiner ... Lt. Cmdr. Data  Michael Corbett ... Dr. Rabal  Margaret Reed ... Dr. Serova  Lee Arenberg ... DaiMon Prak  Majel Barrett ... Enterprise Computer (voice) Rest of cast listed alphabetically:  Joyce Agu ... Ensign Gates (uncredited)  David Keith Anderson ... Ensign Armstrong (uncredited)  Lena Banks ... Starfleet Ensign (uncredited)  Michael Braveheart ... Crewman Martinez (uncredited)  David Paul Christian ... Ten Forward Waiter (uncredited)  Tracee Cocco ... Ensign Jae (uncredited)  Debbie David ... Ensign Russell (uncredited)  Rad Milo ... Operations Division Ensign (uncredited)  Oliver Theess ... Command Division Officer (uncredited)

Produced by

Rick Berman ... executive producer Brannon Braga ... co-producer Merri D. Howard ... line producer Peter Lauritson ... producer David Livingston ... supervising producer Ronald D. Moore ... producer Wendy Neuss ... co-producer Michael Piller ... executive producer Jeri Taylor ... executive producer (showrunner)

Music by

Dennis McCarthy

Cinematography by

Jonathan West ... director of photography

Film Editing by

Stephen M. Tucker ... (as Steve Tucker)

Casting By

Junie Lowry-Johnson Ron Surma

Production Design by

Richard D. James

Set Decoration by

Jim Mees

Costume Design by

Robert Blackman

Makeup Department

Laura Connolly ... hair stylist Patricia Miller ... hair stylist (as Patti Miller) Gilbert A. Mosko ... makeup artist (as Gil Mosko) June Westmore ... makeup artist (as June Abston Haymore) Michael Westmore ... makeup designer / makeup supervisor Joy Zapata ... hair designer Erwin H. Kupitz ... wig maker (uncredited)

Production Management

Wendy Knoller ... post-production supervisor Brad Yacobian ... unit production manager

Second Unit Director or Assistant Director

Jerry Fleck ... first assistant director Arlene Fukai ... second assistant director Dave Goldfarb ... dga trainee (as David Goldfarb) (1993)

Art Department

Jason German ... props Jim Magdaleno ... scenic artist Michael Okuda ... scenic art supervisor Charles Peter Russo ... assistant property master (as Charles Russo) Alan Sims ... property master Al Smutko ... construction coordinator Gary Speckman ... set designer Rick Sternbach ... senior illustrator Herman F. Zimmerman ... original set designer (as Herman Zimmerman) Ed Miarecki ... props (uncredited) Michael W. Moore ... props (uncredited)

Sound Department

Ruth Adelman ... sound editor Alan Bernard ... sound mixer Greg Faust ... re-recording mixer Alfred T. Ferrante ... adr mixer Jeff Gersh ... sound editor Mace Matiosian ... supervising sound editor Miguel Rivera ... sound editor Masanobu 'Tom' Tomita ... sound editor (as Masanobu Tomita) Jerry Trent ... foley artist Guy Tsujimoto ... sound editor

Special Effects by

Dick Brownfield ... special effects

Visual Effects by

Michael Backauskas ... visual effects coordinator Philip Barberio ... visual effects coordinator Dan Curry ... visual effects producer Max Gabl ... lead matte artist (remastered version) Adam Howard ... visual effects compositor Ronald B. Moore ... visual effects supervisor Chris B. Schnitzer ... motion control technician Edward L. Williams ... visual effects associate Gregory Jein ... model maker (uncredited)

Stunts

Tracee Cocco ... stunts (uncredited)

Camera and Electrical Department

Tom Bookout ... grip Steve Gausche ... first company grip Ron Knox ... chief lighting technician (as R.D. Knox) Kris Krosskove ... "a" camera operator Frank Detone Jr. ... grip (uncredited)

Casting Department

Helen Mossler ... casting executive

Costume and Wardrobe Department

Marilyn Basaker ... first hand Matthew A. Hoffman ... key costumer Carol Kunz ... wardrobe supervisor Renee Nault ... cutter fitter Kimberley J. Thompson ... key costumer (as Kimberley Thompson)

Editorial Department

John Farrell ... supervising editor (as J.P. Farrell) Larry Field ... final colorist Dawn Velazquez ... post-production coordinator

Music Department

Alexander Courage ... composer: main title theme Jerry Goldsmith ... composer: main title theme Gerry Sackman ... music editor

Script and Continuity Department

Cosmo Genovese ... script supervisor Joyce Hefel ... script supervisor: pretiming

Additional Crew

André Bormanis ... science consultant Lolita Fatjo ... pre-production associate Kristine Fernandez ... production associate (as Kristine Fernandes) Kim Fitzgerald ... production associate Mark Miller ... technical director: Unitel Michael Okuda ... technical consultant Diane Overdiek ... production coordinator Rick Sternbach ... technical consultant Dennis Tracy ... stand-in: Patrick Stewart (uncredited)

"Star Trek: The Next Generation" Na de dNF id

1993) - IMDb

Edit



In this episode a Federation wide speed limit is put in place because of the harmful effects traveling at high warp has on subspace. While it is never mentioned in any of the TV series or movies it was mentioned in a book that the new class 9 warp drive being tested in the new Intrepid-class starships, such as the U.S.S. Voyager, had been designed to not have those harmful effects on subspace. So after the new class 9 warp drive tests were successful all Starfleet vessels had their warp cores replaced with new ones with similar modifications to the class 9 warp drive, which is why the Federation wide speed limit is never brought up again.

This episode went through a very troubled production history because the staff couldn't figure out what to do with it. They commented: "When the script was written, it was too short. So then we started adding scenes about Data's cat. By luck (or by bad luck), all of those scenes came at the beginning of the show. So you had an episode that started fitfully, with an unrelated cat subplot. Then it took a turn and seemed to be about Geordi's rivalry with the other guy. Then back to the cat and finally in the third act, the real story began. By that point, people were hopelessly lost. It never got back on track, even if its intentions were good." Michael Piller: "I think this is the worst show I worked on this season. It inspired us to have several meetings over where the season was going. I felt we were letting it slip away." Brannon Braga: "There were preposterous moments. And we knew the risks, which is why we thought it important to do an environmental show. We struggled with making it a personal story and in the end it just didn't work as well as we wanted to. We couldn't find a personal angle. And when you limit warp drive, the rug is pulled out from under Star Trek. I wish more time had been spent with that, and less time with Spot the cat."

Data's attempts to keep training Spot from not jumping onto his desk would still be unsuccessful going into 2371, as shown in Star Trek: Generations (1994).

The episode derived from a premise Joe Menosky had created back in the sixth season, known as "Limits". Menosky's allegory for modern day environmental problems was dropped as an element from several episodes that season, including Star Trek: The Next Generation: Suspicions (1993).

First episode where Data's cat Spot is now referred to as a she. In all previous episodes Spot is referred to as a "he."

The first mention of bio-mimetic gel, an extremely valuable substance often employed in Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (1993) and Star Trek: Voyager (1995). The USS Voyager's computers are regulated by bio-neural gel packs. Science consultant André Bormanis based this element on news that Cambridge researchers had developed material that could create small tubules that mimic certain cellular-level biological activities and structures.

Previously Data's cat, Spot, has always been a male. However starting with this episode, and continuing through the end of the series, Spot is suddenly a female. It was mentioned in the Star Trek: Encyclopedia that the writers said in a later interview when questioned about this that perhaps Spot had some sort of transporter accident.

The first Trek episode where a speed limit is imposed on all Federation vessels. This is mentioned intermittently throughout this final season of TNG but never on Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (1993) or Star Trek: Voyager (1995). What with the production staff's dissatisfaction with this episode, its likely they erased it from canon in their minds, rather than found some off-screen solution to remedy the warp effect.

Although Data is devoted to his cat, in reality Brent Spiner hates cats.

We learn the standard crew complement for a Ferengi Dekora class vessel is 450.

Continues the tradition of using 24th century matters to comment on social and political conditions in real life. Warp drives harming the fabric of space refers to fossil fuel emissions from aircraft, cars, and trucks contributing to anthropogenic climate change.

Several wall displays in this episode read "RS Corridor". According to Michael Okuda, this was a mistake, the name of the Hekaras Corridor was misspelled on the graphic and then all but the last two incorrect letters were accidentally deleted. This error is still present in the Remastered Edition.

This takes place in 2370.

As with the original series, TNG has included many episodes that address critically important social issues. Dr. Rabal projects the worsening impact of this issue over a period of several decades, which parallels the worsening impact of such real world issues as pollution and global warming, the impact of which is being felt decades after the broadcast of this episode. The response to the issue is also an accurate depiction of reality.

The costume worn by Margaret Reed (Dr. Serova) was later sold off at an online auction.

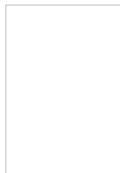
The costume worn by Michael Corbett (Dr. Rabal) was later sold off at an online auction.

Spoilers

The trivia item below may give away important plot points.

Although much of the plot centers around the Enterprise attempting to rescue the Federation medical ship Fleming, the Fleming herself never appears on screen. The Enterprise crew never communicate directly with the Fleming, and none of them appear on screen, even after they are beamed aboard the Enterprise.

Contribute to This Page



Top Gap

Answer

See more gaps »

"Star Trek: The Next Generation" Force of Nature (TV Episode 1993) - IMDb



6/10

Imposing a speed limit in space

Warning: Spoilers

The enterprise has been dispatched to the Hekaras Corridor; a narrow corridor through an otherwise impassable area of space, to investigate the disappearance of a medical transport ship. Suspicion falls on a Ferengi vessel that had been seen in the area. The Enterprise finds the Ferengis but they appear to be dead in space. After a brief confrontation it emerges that they had activated a mine which had been disguised as a navigation buoy. The Enterprise investigates further and triggers such a mine soon after is boarded by two aliens. They are a brother and sister who claim that ship's warp engines are causing dangerous effects near their home world that will ultimately cause a spatial rift that could destroy the planet. Picard promises to forward their research to the Federation but that isn't enough for the sister she decides to prove her theory in a suicide mission that deliberately causes a warp core breach in her ship. The resulting explosion does indeed cause a rift and the medical ship is caught inside it; the crew of the Enterprise will have to find a way to rescue them which doesn't involve using the warp engines within the rift. In an early side story Geordi has difficulty while looking after Data's cat; Data tries to train it but his efforts have little effect; we also have another side plot involving Geordi trying to increase the engine efficiency as part of a rivalry with an engineer on another ship.

This was a fairly disappointing episode; it starts with a rather unnecessary plot involving Data's cat that, while amusing at times, didn't really go anywhere. Likewise the subplot about Geordi's rivalry with a fellow engineer didn't add anything to the story. These aren't the main problems with the episode though; that is the overly preachy nature of the main plot. We are clearly meant to see a parallel with the problems caused by warp travel and pollution. We also have the unlike way that the female alien causes a rift to prove her point in a way that will probably affect her planet far more than the passing warp-powered ship. The resolution where a speed limit of Warp Five is imposed on the Federation seems to be something that could limit future stories although I don't recall this limit being applied in 'Voyager' and 'Deep Space Nine'. Overall a rather disappointing episode where the subplots go nowhere and the main story is overly preachy.

22 out of 32 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. Permalink

6/10

The fragile fabric of space

Warning: Spoilers

On a rescue mission to find and help a Federation science vessel lost in a part of space that is somewhat unstable, the Enterprise finds a brother and sister pair of scientists from Hecares who are disabling vessels in the area. They did this to the Federation ship the Fleming and to a Ferengi

ship that the Enterprise also encounters.

From the planet Hecares the Enterprise encounters siblings Michael Corbett and Margaret Reed who have been trying to convince the Federation and other warp capable aliens not to use warp engines in their neighborhood. Reed and Corbett are truly dedicated to their beliefs, as much as any earth scientist in our history ridiculed for their new theories like Isaac Newton or Louis Pasteur.

In fact Reed's not willing to have the Federation scientists come out to study the problem after her ideas have to go through Federation bureaucracy. She makes her point quite dramatically.

In this most serious episodes apparently it was decided that a little comic relief was necessary. This is provided by Brent Spiner discussing with LeVar Burton the methods of training a cat. I could have told them that cats are lovable, but not trainable. Data's cat Spot is one smart feline.

Being a cat daddy, I had to like this episode.

10 out of 14 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

Environmental episode.

Warning: Spoilers

ST:TNG:161 - "Force Of Nature" (Stardate: 47310.2) - this is the 9th episode of the 7th and last season of Star Trek: The Next Generation.

The Enterprise arrives in a area which poses a hazard to warp-driven vessels, searching for the U.S.S. Fleming, a medical transport that disappeared in this region of space. Soon, they discover who the culprit was - two aliens who have been disabling ships in this area to get the Federation to listen to their concerns - that the use of warp drives may be decimating their planet and destroying the fabric of space! A very intriguing "environmental" episode.

Trivia note: Data's cat Spot is seen again, but in this episode and the upcoming "Genesis", he is now a she! Data also tries to train the cat throughout this episode, with varying success.

21 out of 35 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

3/10

Preachy and not all that interesting as well.

This episode of "Star Trek: The Next Generation" is obviously inspired by various social concerns during the last several decades. The plot is clearly a variation on a plot about pollution, global cooling and global warming. Whether you believe or disbelieve the climate change theories, the episode just comes off as preachy and could have used a great infusion of energy and humor. It's just terribly preachy.

When the Enterprise goes through a portion of space, it finds that it and other ships that recently went through this area were disabled--and soon it becomes certain why. A local race believes that the use of warp engines is damaging space--and they intend to put a stop to it any way they can. Well, the Captain is able to get one of these scientists to agree that the Federation should send scientists to investigate whereas his sister is insistent that the time to make huge changes is now and no one should investigate because she proved warp engines the bad. See the parallels to today?

The show also has an underdeveloped plot involving Spot the cat. It really seemed tacked on--like a time filler. And, oddly, it was dropped from the show and never really addressed after about a third of the way into the show. The bottom line is that the script seemed a bit of a mess and lacked one important element--FUN.

30 out of 69 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

6/10

An inconvenient truth

I've remembered this episode over the years (it's been a good twenty or so) for the eco-minded bombshell it unloads fairly early on. Turns out warp travel is ripping holes in the fabric of space, and Starfleet needs to take its foot off the gas. And that adds dramatic heft so instances where time is of the essence. Remember when Picard ignored his superiors in "First Contact" and ordered maximum warp to the Borg skirmish? He wasn't playing around.

But now, the episode comes off preachy. It's all about the message and belaboring the point. And I still think it's an interesting point to be made, but maybe not with a sledgehammer.

6/10

11 out of 22 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

7/10

We are killing space itself

Warning: Spoilers

An interesting episode about ramifications of warp drive upon a planet of aliens. In the review section the gloves are off between the red face environmentalist and those who did not appreciate being brow beaten with the environmental message.

I go into trek with the expectation of getting a bit of a sermon but I do appreciate when it is elegantly done. This episode messaging reminds me of that S1 episode when Wesley crusher ask Tasha Yar why people would do drugs.

Does anyone (who is a trek fan) not believe it is in our best interest to practice environmental conservatism? Makes sense to me.

This episode is quite interesting in how it resolves the problem----- Starfleet decides to mitigate the issue by putting up a speed limit. I suppose you could call that a depressing dose of realism

It's a pretty okay episode. They should have ditched the plot element of Data training his cat and inserted a love arc between Geordi and one of the scientists ---- We could get some delicious tense moments and her sacrifice would have had additional weight. That's my 20/20 hindsight kicking in ----

6 out of 10 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. Permalink

6/10

That Darned Warp Drive!

Warning: Spoilers

This preachy episode involves efforts by a female alien to get starships to stop using a corridor in space. She claims the use of warp drive is damaging the fabric of space. To prove her point she destroys herself. The investigation into this is what this episode is about. The dramatic use of subterfuge to prove their point could made the brother and sister true terrorists. Of course, what they want is for the powers that be to listen to them before it is too late. This episode is really heavy handed. It would seem that their ultimate findings were quietly ignored. There are just too many unanswered questions in this presentation.

10 out of 25 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. Permalink

9/10

Well, it's only "preachy" until you die because of it...

Seeing the ignorance and the political nature of most of the reviews on this episode, one can only come to the conclusion that humanity would deserve its fate when the environmental damage we all do on Earth will become critical. Too bad those responsible for the mess created won't be alive then to suffer the consequences, but their descendants will.

I didn't expect this kind of opinions on this episode, especially since TNG primarily speaks to intelligent and open-minded viewers, who would supposedly understand that if you leave your trash in front of your home, it will eventually stink and produce all kinds of bugs and other... "inconveniences". It's the same with pollution on Earth and the same with the effect of the warp drive on normal space in the fictional TNG universe. By definition, a warp drive is warping space to move an object instead of increasing the kinetic energy of the object, by generating warp fields to form a subspace bubble that envelops the starship, distorting the local spacetime continuum and moving the starship at velocities that could greatly exceed the speed of light. It's similar to folding a thin piece of metal, to get one side next to the other. Now, even children know what happens when you quickly and repeatedly do this to that thin piece of metal: it eventually breaks - just like paper is easier to tear in a straight line after folding it and the same as space does after being repeatedly "warped" (i.e. folded) in the same location(s) by starships. Bottom line, there's nothing "preachy" about the scenario in this episode, just like it's nothing "preachy" about the fact that pollution or deforestation are endangering life on Earth - it's simply the truth.

So, what can you do faced with these close-minded, bureaucracy oriented and irresponsible people, who would either not believe or not take or delay any measure to alleviate or correct the damage? You'd do what the alien's sister did in this episode, sacrificing safety for understanding and appropriate reaction. Maybe the reviewers who considered this fine episode "preachy" need to experience the same - there's nothing more convincing than having to fight for survival. It's up to the viewers to connect the dots and realize the similarities between what happens in this episode in a fictional world and what already happens or could happen in our very real one. Unless they're blinded by petty concerns like profit or politics, that is...

28 out of 59 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. Permalink

7/10

Nice message but poor execution

I really don't need to elaborate anymore. The title says it all. I did enjoy reading through the IMDb's one star ratings and noticed those same viewers leave scathing reviews over any show that has message about the environment.

Conservative Republicans, Star Trek may NOT be the show for you. Might wanna stick with Ayn Rand and stay in your wheelhouse.

26 out of 50 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

4/10

Um mistake obvious to only me or did someone else see it also?????

Warning: Spoilers

I see no one else pointing out that while they are in the rift attempting to ride this wave that is tearing the ship apart they start the impulse engines to build speed so the wave thingy will work???? If they can use the impulse engines why on earth were they not? Instead they come up with a plan involving coasting through the rift???

7 out of 17 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

5/10

It's not preachy, it just has a pretty random narrative

The Enterprise crew discovers that warp-travel causes rifts in the fabric of space.

This is a strange episode that takes a very important topic and presents it in a way that feels slightly ill conceived.

The initial concept of environmental sustainability is a perfect topic to address in a progressive show like Star Trek, but it feels to have been tackled with little effort in what feels like a tick box exercise by the showrunners.

It begins quite whimsical before veering in the direction of the main plot, which is presented by guest characters who are relatively bland. There is an attempt at making it exciting with the 'surfing' scenes, but this simply consists of the bridge shaking a few times as the characters exchange technobabble. Then it is nicely wrapped up by the speed limit solution and aside from the odd reference to the limit, it is never properly addressed again in the show.

There are some scenes I enjoyed. Randomly, the Spot scenes with Data and Geordie are quite amusing. Also the presentation in the final scene and discussion works well.

The main cast do a good job with the material they have, but for such a big topic this for me is largely forgettable.

4 out of 10 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

3/10

Dr. Serova is even dumber than they intended to portray her.

Warning: Spoilers

The premise of this episode is one that hinges on the stupidity of a character. Dr. Serova is already portrayed as irresponsible but we're also meant to take away that she's a genius who can see something nobody else can. She forces a warp core breach and sacrifices her life in the explosion to prove that massive amounts of warp energy will disrupt subspace and cause a rift that would prevent warp. She does this because the effect is supposedly cumulative and traditional warp engine energy is only a tiny fraction of the amount required to cause a rift. If that's the case then eventually it would become pretty obvious she was right as ship traffic continues over the years to come. She'd have been proven right eventually and likely with plenty of time to do something about it, all without her having to kill herself like a dummy. There was no reason to do what she did at all.

15 out of 33 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

1/10

30 Years Ago Chicken Little Episodes Existed

Yes the sky has been falling for a long time, but this time they mean it! Take the preachy self righteousness of this episode and multiply it out and you get ST: Discovery

12 out of 35 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

1/10

A terrible attempt at an anti-pollution episode

This was a terrible episode. And it would foreshadow the mediocre direction of Brannon Braga produced Star Trek. This episode was meant to make people think about pollution. But it used the fictitious warp drive as the method and created a story line that says warp speed was damaging space. All that was achieved was the very clear idea that Braga looked at his viewers as if they were children. This episode felt very much like some light made for kids show with superheroes giving us sermons of how we should live our lives.

This show may have been a swing for the fences by Braga in terms of landing some sort of award like the Peabody. Whatever his goal, it failed miserably.

Near the end the cast all take turns delivering political points on protecting the environment of space from further damage and the scene plays like a cheesy public service message.

It is incredible that they did not have the actors go ahead and officially break the 4th wall and deliver a message to the viewers from Braga. And they may as well have done that since the scene was so obviously written to make Trek and the actors look politically correct and the lines seemed to come from the actors not the characters.

This was very close to being The Next Generation's worst episode and unfortunately all of Braga's Enterprise and 75% of Voyager was far worse.

Brannon Braga is to Star Trek as Joel Schumacher to Batman. Braga killed Trek just as Schumacher killed the 90's Bat-films. Both are two men with no talent or instinct for entertainment and should be kept away from it FOREVER!!

31 out of 92 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

2/10

Didnt like this episode

I agree with Geordie, his warp drive wasnt even bad. Why didnt all the other species detect these things ? I skip this one.watch it once and thats it.

13 out of 38 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

5/10

A Senior Trekker writes.....

Warning: Spoilers

The final season of Star Trek, the Next Generation gave us some splendid episodes and also a fair share of stinkers. Everyone knew by this stage that they would not be renewed and attempts were made to wrap up various story lines before they said their final goodbyes. There is still a great deal to be enjoyed.

Bloody hell! It's the first time in a long time I've dozed off in front of an episode of Star Trek. And to add insult to injury, I had my cat snoozing on my lap at the time. Even he couldn't be roused to show interest in a pre-credit sequence where all that happens is that Data tries to get Spot to come out from under the bed.

There is quite a lot of technobabble which seems to be implying that the outer space super-highways are so overcrowded that the fabric of reality is being torn apart by their over-use. Not a lot of actual mathematics in play here, then. It was obviously intended to be a "message" episode about environmental damage to the world we live in but unfortunately, HOWEVER LAUDABLE the intentions might have been, the execution just wasn't very good.

Apart from some nonsense about Geordi being in competition with the engineer of another ship and some more tips on cat training (equally uninspiring to my own feline companion) we were introduced to a pair of aliens in swish, navy blue bouclé outfits. I'm afraid that all I remember about them is how their foreheads matched their costumes and that when one died, the other seemed remarkably nonplussed despite the fact that she had been introduced earlier as his sister.

I challenge anyone to get more out of this episode. If they can stay awake, that is.

Senior Trekker scores every episode with a 5.

3 out of 9 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

10/10

Preachy? Only if you're a science denier or a conservative

Warning: Spoilers

Honestly, this is **exactly** how modern politics works. Is the episode over the nose? Yeah, sure. So was TOS. Which I'm sure all these naysayers love. Probably in part because Kirk was a womanizer, and in the TOS black people still knew their place.

Do you really not see the relevance of how, in today's climate, multiple people in power don't bother listening to legitimate, peaceful grievances? And so when any suggestion is made that greed, ignorance, and uncaring of the powerful are at fault, they default to saying that it's "preachy"? And that any inconvenience, even one which just results in say, slight inconvenience, like a stopped roadway (or space channel) needs to be met with violent retribution? Just compare the response of Picard to say... You know, any police department across the US?

You guys hate this episode because they didn't get merc'd as terrorists right off the bat. That's what you really wanted wasn't it? Don't deny it.

It's a good episode that shows how the Federation isn't fully in the best interests of all people. And, even in this episode, as well as much of DS9, it shows how the federation is much like the US: actively ignoring facts they know to be true to continue to profit of one peoples against another. It's the rare TNG episode that actually gets realistic about the Federation's actions. And of how people in charge could actually do something about it, with some support from below.

Honestly. In closing, to the people watching the Henry VI episode, and hated this: did you even realize what you were watching? If yes, I guess it's just proof that fascists aren't uneducated, they're just evil.

19 out of 48 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

5/10

We're all going to die!

I half expected Al Gore to show up and start showing pictures of melting glaciers and hurricanes and some scary graphs!

This is a show where it's the future and all of the trivial matters like global warming have been solved. One would expected they'd be sustainable-minded and think about their impact on the environment BEFORE traveling through space.

It seems humanity was not that illuminated after all in the 24th century.

6 out of 12 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

3/10

Let's horse and buggy. Except methane! Duh.

Global warming at Warp Speed. Happy the disturbed doctor expired. She caused the problem.

What about the Chinese, Indians, Brazilians, Russian's and Iranians? Oh wait. That's Romulans, Ferengi, Cardashions (lol), Klingons, as well as the Borg. STFU liberalism. We're all going to die. It's just a matter of time. You first.

4 out of 9 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

7/10

Where are "Q" when you need him (it/them) ?

Warning: Spoilers

It finally happens: there is a conjunction between the Star Trek 'multiverse' and environmental issues. What results? the serious commission of a study.

Please, harken to the adjective 'serious'...it is what differentiates Star Trek from current political advisory panels. In today's world, we would watch as political entities vie to decide whether a multitude of opposing commercial and therefore political forces struggle to be foremost in their assessment (or abnegation) of environmental concerns.

In this episode of Star Trek, we see both the best and the worst, of a rational response: Now, here's the key: one must TRUST, and have an overriding reason to trust, the review procedure...there ain't no real alternative: one must believe in the impartiality of the process...which means the process details MUST be transparent!!!

2 out of 11 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

7/10

Same acting school or what?

Michael Corbett as the Dr. Rabal character sure seems to be a dead ringer for Christian Bale. Is it possible he has a twin brother? Either that or he assumes this persona for TV work. Watch it and see what I mean. OK, I just found the episode on a popular video sharing site. That's Christian Bale with some clay glommed on his forehead. I am certain. Check out the voice and the mannerisms. It could be right out of American Psycho. Has anybody seen both these actors in the same place? If somebody can show me that I will alter my opinion. I can't say this strongly enough. Really, if they were ever in the same movie I would not be able to tell them apart.

4 out of 42 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. [Permalink](#)

6/10

REVIEW 2022

Warning: Spoilers

Spot's trapped under the bed, she's been misbehaving... does she need training? When the majority of trivia and goofs are only about Spot there has to be something wrong.

And that was the pre-title intro. Is this going to be a show about Spot?

Now we have a disappearance of the medical transport Fleming which has gone missing somewhere in the Hekaras Corridor. This is a region of space where there is an unusually intense tetryon field which poses a severe navigational hazard. The Hekaras Corridor is the only safe passage through this field.

Geordi feels that he is in competition with Chief Engineer of the Intrepid: Commander Donald Kaplan.

We are still being distracted with talk of Data's cat. Where are we going with all this?

The Ferengi are up to no good as usual. Ferengi say buoy (boo-ee). In England we say buoy (boy), but this has nothing to do with this story.

So, we have the main story that continues as a search for the missing Fleming and the run-in with the Ferengi.

The secondary story revolves around Spot the Cat and ongoing attempts at training him/her. Oh, and we are still in competition with the Intrepid Chief Engineer who we will never actually meet.

Thankfully, the two nice aliens, Serova and Rabal have beamed aboard and provide a much needed distraction from the ongoing cat coaching question.

Is it me, or are the writers and the cast just going through the motions? We know we are in our last season and we know that budgets have been stripped down and given to DS9. I can understand why they would try to cobble together a story using old TNG stock images. That's bound to save a few dollars. This show's turned into a rescue mission which we know will finally be resolved to everyone's satisfaction, except Serova's. Now she lives only amongst the stars. I believe my time would have been better spent in the company of Deanna Troi down in the swimming pool.

This Episodes Clue: A particular place or point

(Answer's to all episode clues will appear in the reviews of season seven, episode 25: All Good Things, Part One.)

0 out of 0 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. Permalink

10/10

Gotta imagine how the "it's so political!" people watch the rest of Star Trek

Seriously, has anyone complaining about this episode being preachy seen another episode of Star Trek? And by the way, labeling discussion of climate change "preachy" is an interesting way of saying you don't believe the 99% of scientists who say it's occurring. This isn't some random political issue the episode is taking sides on, it's quite literally the future of humanity.

I completely agree with the person who said humanity deserves what's coming to it. That doesn't mean everyone, of course, and certainly not our descendants. But overall, it appears humanity simply couldn't cut it. Case in point, a lot of us labeled an existential threat to our species "political," and any discussion or attempt to raise awareness about it "preachy." Perhaps an alien ship from the equivalent of the Federation will come upon Earth in a few hundred years and ruefully observe an exhibition of their version of natural selection.

1 out of 5 found this helpful. Was this review helpful? Sign in to vote. Permalink

"Star Trek: The Next Generation" Force of Nature (TV Episode 1993) - IMDb

Star Trek: The Next Generation

- Cast & crew
- User reviews
- Trivia

- Episode aired Nov 13, 1993
- TV-PGTV-PG
- 46m



While searching for a missing Federation medical transport, the Enterprise is accosted by two scientists from a nearby planet who claim that cumulative exposure to warp energy is weakening t... Read allWhile searching for a missing Federation medical transport, the Enterprise is accosted by two scientists from a nearby planet who claim that cumulative exposure to warp energy is weakening the fabric of space.While searching for a missing Federation medical transport, the Enterprise is accosted by two scientists from a nearby planet who claim that cumulative exposure to warp energy is weakening the fabric of space.

- See production, box office & company info
- See more at IMDbPro

Review

Let's horse and buggy. Except methane! Duh.

Global warming at Warp Speed. Happy the disturbed doctor expired. She caused the problem.

What about the Chinese, Indians, Brazilians, Russian's and Iranians? Oh wait. That's Romulans, Ferengi, Cardashions (lol), Klingons, as well as the Borg. STFU liberalism. We're all going to die. It's just a matter of time. You first.

- eee-17009
- Apr 18, 2022

IMDb Best of 2022

IMDb Best of 2022

Discover the stars who skyrocketed on IMDb's STARmeter chart this year, and explore more of the Best of 2022; including top trailers, posters, and photos.

See more



Related news

Contribute to this page

Suggest an edit or add missing content

More to explore

Recently viewed

Please enable browser cookies to use this feature.

[Learn more.](#)

Force of Nature

The U.S.S. Enterprise learns of the disappearance of a medical transport ship, the U.S.S. Fleming, which vanished in the Hekaras Corridor, the only safe route through an area of space filled with tetryon particles, which pose a navigation hazard to warp-driven vessels. When they discover that a Ferengi ship was also spotted in the area, Beverly Crusher suggests the Ferengi may have hijacked the Fleming to steal its supply of valuable bio-mimetic gel. All agree that this is a possibility and set course for the area. The Enterprise locates the Ferengi ship, and the crew is surprised to discover the ship's field coils have been overloaded and it is operating at very low power. The Ferengi vessel does not respond to the Enterprise's hails, but suddenly regains power and fires on the starship.

The Enterprise returns fire and disables the Ferengi vessel's weapons system, after which Picard contacts the Ferengi commander, DaiMon Prak. Prak meets with Picard and Riker and tells them that his ship encountered what appeared to be a Federation signal buoy, but it suddenly emitted a verteron pulse that caused it to lose power. While Prak admits to having seen the Fleming, he refuses to help the Enterprise locate it unless their engineers help him repair his vessel. This is agreed to, and the Enterprise soon sets course after the Fleming, tracing it to a debris field. They enter the field and encounter a small object that emits a verteron pulse. Suddenly, their subspace systems are disabled — just like on the Ferengi ship — then two aliens board the Enterprise uninvited.

The Hekaran brother and sister, Rabal and Serova, claim that according to their research, the use of warp fields in the area is destroying their planet and will soon render it uninhabitable. They have been disabling offending ships in hopes of forcing Starfleet to investigate. They explain to Geordi that the use of warp drive is so harmful to their system that they are willing to give it up — a move that will effectively isolate their planet from the rest of the Federation. Data finds that their theory could be valid and asks Picard to summon the Science Council for a more thorough investigation. However, this does not satisfy Serova, who dismisses it as a stalling tactic. She suddenly takes off in her ship and creates a warp breach, sacrificing her life to prove her theory by creating a dangerous rift in space.

Data learns that the Fleming is trapped in the rift, which emits high-energy distortion waves that rock the Enterprise. Picard orders Data, Geordi and Rabal to find a way to get the Fleming out without using warp drive, and Data suggests they coast into the rift after initiating one brief warp pulse. The crew puts the plan into effect, and Geordi, realizing he has been unwilling to consider the dangers of a technology he is so close to, apologizes to Rabal for his loss. They then coast into the rift as planned, but the Fleming activates its warp drive and makes the rift even larger, severely damaging their ship in the process.

Left without enough momentum to leave the rift, Geordi suggests the Enterprise "ride" a distortion wave out after the evacuation of the Fleming is complete. After several aborted attempts, he manages to "catch" a wave and the Enterprise escapes the rift. Once things get back to normal, the crew meets with Rabal, who shows them the possible effects of continuing warp damage. Based on the Enterprise's reports, the Federation Council issues a new directive limiting all Federation vessels to a speed of warp five, except in extreme emergency. Later, Picard sadly tells Geordi how, by exploring the universe he loves, he may have inadvertently been destroying it. Geordi is reassuring, reminding the Captain that now that they are aware, they can work to help the universe rather than harm it.