

THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION

By David T Lu and Mickey McCarter

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The Hitchhiker's Guide to

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The Next Generation

[Don't Panic!]

by
David T Lu and Mickey McCarter

(with sincere apologies to Douglas Adams and all Star Trek writers)

September 21, 1990

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The Hitchhikers Guide to Star Trek - Part 1

SCENE 1:

Enterprise Bridge. Everyone at his/her stations.

Data: Captain, sensors are picking up two vessels ahead. One appears to be firing upon the other. However, I am receiving no distress signals.

Picard: Is it the Borg, Mr. Data?

Data: I believe it is the Borg, sir. The larger ship appears to be rectangular in shape.

Riker: Red Alert! Shields up! Fire all weapons!

Picard: Delay that order, Number One. In case you haven't noticed, I'm not even kidnapped yet. Therefore, I am in charge of this ship!

Riker: Oh, that's right. Sorry, sir. I'll wait until you've been kidnapped, and *then* I'll fire at the Borg ship, with you in it!

Picard: Err..., right! What about the other ship, Data? Is it the Romulans?

Data: Unknown, Captain. It's shaped like ... a shoe.

Picard: A shoe?

Riker: It must be the rumored Romulan Nike class. It's supposed to run faster, jump farther, has better shields for shock absorption, and a little pump on top that you can squeeze. I read about it in this week's Playbeing ... err, (avoiding the questioning gaze of Troi) only for the articles, of course. It's supposed to be top secret. Didn't you see it, Captain?

Picard: You mean that article on page 42, right after the holoimages of Eccentrica Gallumbits, the triple-breasted whore of Eroticon Six? Of course not! Everyone knows that I only read William Shakespeare and Oolon Colluphid. Data, on screen.

On the screen, holoimages of Eccentrica Gallumbits of Eroticon Six flash by. She is shown in a variety of rather creative poses. Her three breasts hanging ...

Picard: The Borg, Mr. Data!

Data: My apologies, sir. I thought you meant ...

Picard: Thank you, Mr. Data!

On the screen, we now see the Borg ship tractor-beaming a much smaller, white, shoe-shaped ship. It's shields almost gone, offering no resistance. Hushed disappointments fill the bridge.

Picard: (coughs) Worf, open a channel to the ... shoe.

Worf: Channel opened, sir.

Eddie: Hi there! I'm Eddie, the shipboard computer here at the Heart of Gold, and I want to be your friend!

Picard: (standing up, straightening his uniform) I'm Jean-Luc Picard, Captain of the USS Enterprise. I notice that you are having some difficulties. Do you wish our assistance.

Eddie: Well, hello, Jean-Luc! Oh yeah, I can definitely use an extra hand over here. You see, I'm trying to make some tea.

Riker: Tea?

Data: Tea. An ancient Earth beverage originated in Asia. China, to be precise. It consists of dried leaves in boiled water.

Eddie: Yep, just like your robot says! With milk.

Riker: Squirted out of a cow?

Data: Which, I believe, is an English tradition. By the way, I am not a robot. I'm an android.

Wesley: (whispers) Contractions, Data!

Data: What? Oh, I mean, I am an android.

Picard: Well, that's all very nice. I am sure we can arrange for some tea to be made. Right, Mr. LaForge?

Geordi: It will require redesigning the data structures of our food synthesizers, reprogramming the holodeck to create solid matters simulating Asiatic plant life, implementing an error checking protocol that allows the two to communicate in parallel, and creating a user-friendly, menu-driven, icon-based graphics user interface with mouse support and on-line, context-sensitive, hypertext help. Give me twenty minutes, and I'll have it purring like a Syranian monkey-cow in heat.

Picard: Make it so, Lieutenant. (turning to Eddie on the screen) Actually, the difficulty I was referring to was the Borg that is currently attacking you.

Eddie: Huh? What Borg? Hold on, let me allocate a couple megajoules to my external sensors. (pause) Yikes! Hey, guys, I'm being attac about this. I'll get back to you in a sec.

[Insert 30 seconds of Nike Michael Jordon promo commercial here, interrupted by an Energizer rabbit drumming in ... "Thump! Thump! Thump! And it keeps going, and going, ..."]

SCENE 2:

Meanwhile, on the bridge of the Heart of Gold, Arthur, Ford, Zaphod, and Trillian are staring at the rear viewer as if they are being attacked by the Borg, which, as it happens, they are. The ship continuous to rock continuously as it absorbs blows upon blows of Borg's phasers. Marvin begins to whistle a new tune that he had just made up ...

Arthur: So, this is it. We're all going to die.

Ford: Over a cup of tea.

Trillian: With milk.

Marvin: Don't bother to ask me what tune I'm whistling, because even if I tell you, you won't understand it. Here I am, brain the size of a planet, reduced to entertaining myself by making music. Music. Oh, how I hate music. By the way, our shields can last another 23.2536 seconds, in case anyone's wondering.

He paused for what he calculates to the nanosecond the amount of time required for an average human being and an average Betelgeusian to register in their pity cerebrums the destruction time that he had just cited, then added another 1.2548 seconds to compensate for this particular crew.

Marvin: I'm not getting you down at all, am I?

Zaphod: Hey, guys, lighten up! I'm sure we can think of something! Let's see (looking under the control console) ... where's Eddie's plug? Maybe we can, like, pull it or something.

Marvin: I thought you wanted excitement and adventure and really wild things.

Zaphod: Shut up, Marvin. Zarquons, I need a drink!

Eddie: Hi guys! (coming back, he startled everyone on the Heart of Gold. Zaphod bangs both of his heads under the control console) Did someone say a drink? Come on, give me a break! Here I am, being attacked by a Borg, whatever _that_ is, and first you asked me to make you some tea, and now you want a drink??!! All right, what'll it be?

Zaphod: Some Gargle Blasters, you misaligned piece of Kronian El-Cheapo Silicon! Now get us outta here!

Eddie: On the rocks?

Zaphod: I said, GET US OUTTA HERE !!!!!!!

Eddie: Okay, okay. Gee, you don't have to take it so personally. Now, where would you like to visit today. I am programmed to take you ...

Zaphod: ANYWHERE !!!!!!!

Marvin: If I may be so bold as to interrupt, which I know is pointless anyway as nobody ever listens to what I have to say. Nobody ever cares about what I thinks, not that it's anyone's fault. My intelligence is so mind-bogglingly vast that nobody can even _began_ to understand what I am thinking. Anyway, I just like to mention that we will all be dissipated into our composing molecules in 5.2387 seconds, not that I'm counting. It's being nice knowing you all ...

Eddie: Anywhere? Hmmmm... well, can someone at least give me a seed for the random number generator?

Zaphod lunges toward the control console, hitting a combination of buttons and switches all at once. Suddenly, the bridge begins to bend out of shape. Space and time warps on top of itself and falls over. Traffic lights appear out of nowhere and amuse themselves by handing out parking tickets. The last decimal digit of pi shys away into a corner and hides itself from mathematicians forever.

It starts to rain "We are the World" albums.

What will happen to our beloved Enterprise? Will they be able to stop the Borg? What about the Heart of Gold? Will it survive the Borg's phasers? Does Arthur still have his pocket fluff? Is anyone carrying a towel? Finally, the question that has been burning in our hearts since the beginning of time ... will Arthur finally be able to get his cup of tea? With milk? For the answers to these, and many other, totally irrelevant questions, stay tuned for the next exciting episode of ...

The Hitchhiker's Guide to Star Trek: The Next Generation!

SCENE 3:

Last time, the Borg was just about to destroy the Heart of Gold, along with all of its crew, while the Enterprise helps out by making some tea ...

Data: Captain, I am getting some very strange readings.

Picard: Explain.

Data: Well, it appears that the Heart of Gold has suddenly disappeared, and the Borg has just turned into a sperm whale.

Riker: What?!

Data: The probability of the Borg's transformation is two to the power of seven trillion, one hundred forty seven million, eight hundred eighteen thousand, four hundred seventy three to one against. That is very improbable, sir.

Riker: This could be a new offensive weapon that we have not yet encountered, Captain.

Picard: Agreed. Torpedoes away!

Two torpedoes speed out from the Enterprise, one of which promptly turns into ten thousand scoops of whipped cream, covering the sperm whale. The other torpedo turns into a giant Frontanian mega-cherry, hitting the whale a second later.

Wesley: Wow! A giant banana split!

Data: Captain, I am getting sporadic readings on the Enterprise.

Picard: Squeek-squeek.

Data: (crooking his head) Captain?

Data turns around from his console.

Data: Captain, may I inform you that you have turned into a small blue furry creature from Alpha Centuri. (turning to Troi) And you, counselor, have turned into Eccentrica Gallumbits, the triple-breasted whore of Eroticon Six.

Riker: I'm glad to see that you're getting your hair back, sir. And Deanna, that extra breast suits you well.

Data: Sir, the probability of you and Counselor Troi's metamorphosis is two to the power of six trillion, twenty seven million, four hundred forty three thousand, eight hundred ninety three to one against.

Picard: Squeek!!

Wesley: Ahhhhhhhhhh!

Data: (turning to Wesley) Interesting. It appears that your console has just turned into an IBM PCjr. (looking back at his own console) And mine has just turned into a Commodore VIC 20.

Meanwhile, Worf has turned into a Ravenous Bugblatter Beast of Traal, and quickly devoured one of the nameless officers on the back of the bridge, who, out of pure coincidence, happens to be wearing a red uniform today. Just before he vanishes into the fangs of Worf, however, a visual contact with the Bridge of the Heart of Gold was suddenly established for a split second, for no good reason other than that it's very very improbable. The rather bewildered face of Arthur Dent flashed across the main viewer. Interestingly, the only thought that crossed the unfortunate officer's mind at that moment, upon seeing Arthur's face, was "Oh no, not again!"

The other officers, in blue uniforms, never met Arthur in their previous lives, and conversant with the creatures of the galaxy, quickly covered their eyes with their Starfleet-issued auto-inflatable towel-in-a-pip that they all wear on their collars.

Wesley: (calmed down, tentatively tapping his PCjr chicklet keyboard) Sir, the computer says that it's tired of opening, and closing, and opening, and closing, and opening, and closing, all the doors on the Enterprise, and that it's now setting course to Ursa Minor for a long-deserved vacation, at maximum warp.

Picard: squeek squeek, sqeeeeeek sqek squeek!

Troi: Captain, I am sensing a great deal of ... confusion, and ... anger ... from you. Are you feeling all right? (battering her eyelashes seductively and sliding her right leg along his furs) Is there _anything_ I can do to make you feel better?

Picard: squeek sqeeek sqeeeeeek!

Riker: (staring at Troi) Captain, perhaps I should get Dr. Crusher?

Picard: squeek!

Troi: Oh, all right. Wesley, call your mother.

Moments later, Dr. Beverly Crusher arrived at the bridge accompanied by five thousand Tribbles and a rather nasty Pogolarian snow blizzard.

[commercial for Snuggles fabric softener ... of course.]

SCENE 4:

Now, back to the Heart of Gold, the improbability level is still high, but rapidly coming down.

Trillian: (relaxing on a bean bag, Romulan Ale in hand, the drink rapidly eating through the mug that holds it) Well, the probability factor has come down to only two to the power of six million, and sixty to one against. Everyone should be starting to feel better now.

Arthur: (hanging in mid-air, in a rather soapy bubble bath) Whir ... what's going on? Where am I? What happened? (slight pause) I don't understand ... isn't there any tea to go with this bath?

Zaphod: (fighting off a pack of Algonian turbo-turtles) Shut up, monkey brain, you and your tea almost got us killed. Hey, I'm still missing one of my heads!

Eddie: Well, guys, how 'bout that! I sure got us outta that Borg mess in a hurry, huh? Man! I sure feel like a song right now. Let's see... any requests? It's request time, gang, and all of my lines are open right now. If there's anything that you'd like to hear, just ... mmm, what the ..., mmm, mmmmmmm mmmmm mmmmm!

Zaphod: (just finishing up applying Stick-O-Tape over Eddie's speakers) That oughta shut you up for a while.

Ford: (drawing himself up from the deck with great difficulty) Wow, that was some hangover!

Trillian: That's no hangover. Eddie just kicked in the improbability drive. Want some Romulan Ale? It'll make you feel better.

Zaphod: Hey, give me some of that stuff.

Trillian: Well, we're down to probability level two to the power of four thousand, six hundred eight to one against. Everything will be normal in a few more seconds. (pause) Where's Marvin? Marvin?

No answer.

Trillian: Marvin, where are you?

Still no answer.

Trillian: Eddie, where's Marvin?

Eddie: mmmmm mmm mmmmmmm mmm-mmm mmmmm.

Trillian: Oh, brother.

Arthur: I think Marvin's missing.

An expression of deep genuine concern failed completely to cross both of Zaphod's faces.

Zaphod: Oh, who cares about that heap of junk metal, anyway? All he ever does is remind us how stupid that monkey-man is, as if we need to be reminded. Asking the ship's computer for a cup of tea when we're getting blown into bits ...

Trillian: Okay! We are now back to normal. But where are we?

Zaphod: Eddie, turn on the external cameras.

Eddie: mm mmm mmm mmm-mmm m mmm mmmm-mmmm-mm mm-mmm mmm mmmmm!

Zaphod: What's he saying?

Ford: I think he wants you to ungag him first.

Zaphod: Yeah, right. I'll just turn the cameras on myself!

Zaphod stumbles over to the console, examining it.

Zaphod: Hmmmm... anyone know what these buttons here do?

And, from outside the ship, a voice is heard ...

Voice: All right, open up! We know you're in there, and we've got you surrounded!

Will the crew of the Enterprise be able to come to terms with their improbable transformations? Where's Marvin? Will Picard like his new hair? Does Deanna have to shop for a new wardrobe to match her new breast? Will Worf eat the Tribbles? And finally, who's holding the crew of the Heart of Gold prisoners? For the the answers (in full color and stereo sound) to these, and many other, rather unimportant questions, watch for the next exciting episode of ...

The Hitchhiker's Guide to Star Trek: The Next Generation!

SCENE 5:

On the Enterprise, everything is slowly returning to normal. Continental plates are again forming on the forehead of Worf. Picard is rapidly losing his hair and his shade of blue, and Troi's third breast is fast melting away, much to her, and Riker's, silent disappointments.

Meanwhile, the Borg has left the sector in a rather confused state of a collectively irrelevant whale existence.

Worf: Burp.

Picard: Your report, Mr. Data.

Data: It appears that an improbability field was created by the Heart of Gold, which caused the Borg to turn into the sperm whale, and everything else that happened here on the Enterprise as well. Including, sir, your existence as a small blue ...

Picard: Yes, yes, Data. And where is the Heart of Gold?

Worf: Sir, the Heart of Gold has materialized in Shuttle Bay Three. Should I send over a security team?

Picard: Prisoners! Good, I've always wanted some. Worf, Data, come with me. You have the bridge, Number One.

Worf and Data starts to follow Picard into the turbo-lift.

Picard: Prisoners ... perhaps I will read them some of my favorite Shakespearean performances.

Worf paused in his tracks like a waiter with five trays on each arm suddenly stopped by a very merry and potentially high-tipping grandmother holding out the fifty photographs of her twenty grandchildren, and asking him, very nicely, if he would like to see her pictures.

Worf: Shakespeare, sir?

Picard: Yes, Mr. Worf. William Shakespeare was a sixteenth century Earth playwright. One of the most talented ...

Worf: I am familiar with Shakespeare, sir. Permission to remain on the bridge, sir, in case the Borg returns.

Picard: But Worf, I don't believe you've heard me do Anthony of Julius Caesar before. (clears throat) Friends, Romans, countrymen!

Worf: In fact, sir, I **have** heard you do Anthony of Julius Caesar.

Picard: Oh. Well, come along anyway. Maybe I'll do one of Hamlet's soliloquys.

Worf followed Picard and Data into the turbo-lift, first with great hesitation, then with a renewed sense of Klingon's enjoyment for pain and suffering.

Worf: Yes, sir.

Data: I, sir, have always being intrigued by your fascination with Shakespeare.

Picard: Ah, well. You see, Data, Shakespeare ...

The doors of the turbo-lift closed on them with a sigh of a job well done. Worf took a deep breath, vastly expanding his chest, and with great difficulty refrained himself from breaking Data's rather stiff neck with a snap of his own rather stiff fingers. Ah ... he sighed deeply to himself. This is going to be even better than the Age of Ascension Ceremony that he went through a couple staryears ago on the holodeck, courtesy of Data, Geordi, and Wes. No fake and cowardly computer imageries this time. This, he thought happily, is going to be real pain.

commercials for ... you guessed it! The Cybernetic Corporation's Happy Vertical People Transporter with the *_newest_*, the *_expanded_*, and the *_vastly improved_* ... Genuine People Personality*! It will add a human touch to *_any_* starship!

Order yours, today!

*For a limited time only, two backup personalities of your choice are included *_free_* with a purchase of five or more personalities! Ask a Cybernetic Corporation's dealer near you!

SCENE 6:

In Shuttle Bay Three, Picard, Data, Worf, and a team of security personnels have surrounded the Heart of Gold.

Picard: All right, open up! We know you're in there, and we've got you surrounded!

Worf: Permission to kick the door in, sir.

Picard: No, Lieutenant. We must act like civilized Starfleet officers. (coughs) "In civility thou seem'st so empty", Mr. Worf.

Data: Ah, Captain. *_As You Like It_*, Act Two. Spoken by, I believe, Duke Senior.

Picard: You're quite correct, Mr. Data.

Worf had a sudden vision of Picard running and screaming from his burning quarters, with twenty sweetly poisoned Klingon Death-O-Shot crossbow arrows protruding from his back, and Data running closely behind, informing him on exactly how much longer before the poisons will take effect, whether he will die first due to loss of blood, what kind of psychological impacts that the arrows will likely to have on his subconscious, and then lightly comment on the fact that he is acting quite uncivilized for a Starfleet Captain.

Shaking himself into reality, he is suddenly relieved by the fact that both Picard and Data are standing on the other side of the Heart of Gold from him.

Worf: My apologies, sir. It's just that I've got myself all worked up.

He is desperately hoping that the occupants of the ship in front of him will give themselves up real soon, so that he can show them just how uncivilized he really is.

Meanwhile, in the Heart of Gold, Zaphod and company have finally activated the external cameras without Eddie ...

Arthur: I think we're surrounded.

Zaphod: Nice observation, Monkey Man.

Arthur: What happened to that guy's head?

Zaphod: He's a Klingon, dumbo.

Arthur is relieved that he is still being insulted. Even though he has no idea what is going on, at least he is still in familiar territory.

Forways outta here.

Trillian: I think we should surrender.

Ford: That was my second idea.

Arthur: Good thinking.

Zaphod: I was gonna show them who they're dealing with, but seeing that I'm out-voted here, and it would take much too much energy for me to do it all along ... well, all right, we'll let them have their fun, just for now.

The loading platform of the Heart of Gold swings open, and the crew walks out into the circle of the Enterprise security, arms above the heads.

Picard: (straightening his uniform, of course) I am Jean-Luc Picard, Captain of the USS Enterprise. I demand to know what on the Enterprise are you doing in my Shuttle Bay Three!

Zaphod: Captain Picard. Do you have any idea who you are speaking to?

Picard: (taken aback) Err..., no.

Zaphod: Count my heads, Picard.

Picard: Well, you have two heads.

Zaphod: Very good, Picard. And how many arms do I have?

Picard: You have three arms.

Data: Captain, only one man in the galaxy has two heads and three arms.

Picard: Yes ... Zaphod Beeblebrox the First, President of the United Federation of Planets!

Zaphod: That's right, dude. You're looking at the very froody Zaphod Beeblebrox. The one and only.

Data: *_Former_* President, Captain. We have just received an emergency all-channel sub-etha broadcast announcing his theft of the Federation's newest starship, the Heart of Gold. The broadcast also includes an arrest order for Mr. Beeblebrox.

Ford: Oh, Zarquons!

Worf: (beaming happily) An arrest! (this is working out better than Worf had hoped) May I interrogate them, sir?

Picard: Well, he *_was_* the President.

Worf: But they are prisoners now, sir.

Picard: All right, interrogate them if you must. Ask them what they want to drink.

Worf takes a deep breath, expanding his chest tremendously. He walks around the crew of the Heart of Gold, eyeing them through the corner of his eyes. His lips are shut in a tight, thin line. He examines every square centimeter of every person up and down, in great detail, stopping at Trillian a little longer than the others.

Worf: (barks) All right, you scums! (taking both of Zaphod's two chins in his two hands and turning both of his heads to him) Look at me when I'm talking to you, you no-good, stinking, son-of-a-Purmusian jungle turtle with ...

Picard: Relax, Lieutenant.

Worf: (takes another deep breath) Yes, sir. (turning back to Zaphod, he barks) WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DRINK ???!

Zaphod: Well, I can sure use some Pan Galactic Gargle Blasters.

Worf: WITH ICE OR WITHOUT ???!!!

Zaphod: Without. I like it straight.

Worf: LEMON ????!!!!

Zaphod: Yeah. Give me two slices.

Worf: (turning to Ford) AND YOU??!

Ford: Oh, the same, please. But can you put one of those Pogolarian snow lizards in mine?

Worf: I AM THE ONE ASKING THE QUESTIONS !!!!!!!

Picard: Lieutenant ...

Worf: (turning to Arthur) AND WHAT DO YOU WANT, MONKEY MAN??!!

Arthur: Do you have any tea?

Worf: WHAT!!!!

Data: Tea, Worf. I believe Geordi is working on some right now.

Suddenly, the red-alert siren echoes through the ship.

Riker: (over the intercom) Captain Picard to the bridge!

Picard: (hitting his communications pin) On my way. (to the security) Take these gentlemen and the lady to our Presidential Detention Suite. Make sure you show them how to use the jacuzzi.

Ensign 1: Yes, sir!

Will Arthur finally be able to get his tea? Did Worf just narrowly escaped another one of Picard's Shakespeare performances? Will the Enterprise send Zaphod to (gasp!) the Total Perspective Vortex on Frogstar? And finally, will Deanna add a third breast to herself surgically? Don't miss the next exciting episode of ...

The Hitchhiker's Guide to Star Trek: The Next Generation!

SCENE 7:

Moments later, Picard, Data, and Worf arrived on the bridge of the Enterprise. A Borg ship hangs ominously in the empty void in front of them.

Riker: Sir, the Borg has returned.

Wesley: I think I like them better as a banana split.

Worf: Captain, we are being probed.

Picard: All hands, battle stations. Shields up, Mr. Worf.

Worf: (pause) Sir, the computer is not responding.

Riker: Is the Borg interfering with our defense systems?

Data: Negative, sir. It seems that the computer is ... busy. We are only getting 15 percent CPU time.

Picard: Busy??!!

Worf: Confirmed, sir. Our shields are now activated.

Picard: Arm everything you have, Mr. Worf. I want you to dump them all at my signal.

Worf: Yes sir!

Meanwhile, on the way to the Presidential Detention Suite ...

Ford: Hey! Careful with that phaser!

Ensign 1: Resistance is useless!

Ford: Well, you don't have to have that thing glued to my back all the time.

Ensign 2: Resistance is useless!

Arthur: What about my tea?

Ensign 1: Resistance is useless!

Computer: (from one of its speakers) Tea synthesization in progress. CPU time, 87.9 percent. Estimated completion time, fifteen minutes.

Ensign 2: Resistance is useless!

The red alert klaxon sounds throughout the corridors of the Enterprise. The call "All hands, battle stations" goes out, slightly bewildering the two ensigns ...

Ensign 1: Battle stations? Do you think that includes us?

Ensign 2: No way. We have direct orders from the Captain to escort these prisoners to the brig.

Ford: (realizing his opportunity to cause some dissension) Sure, you guys get all of the easy work while your Captain sweats it out on the bridge.

Ensign 1: What was that crack supposed to mean?

Ford: Oh, nothing, nothing at all.

Ensign 2: We didn't think so.

Ford: Well, I'm just saying that maybe Captain Picard realizes that the two of you just aren't up to manning battle stations...

Zaphod: (whispering harshly) Ford!

Ford: (ignoring Zaphod) ... and that is why you were given the relatively simple task of escorting us to the brig.

Ensign 2: Oh, yeah? I'll have you know that we happen to be pretty tough customers for a Federation starship.

Ensign 1: That's right. There was a time on Damascus when we had to stun a whole room of aliens with our phasers.

Ensign 2: Yeah, we can get rough if we have to, so don't force us to do anything unpleasant.

Ford: Sounds pretty tough to me. How about you, Arthur?

Arthur: Hmmm? Oh, yes, terribly so. I certainly wouldn't want to get on their bad side.

Ford: (after a pause) How can we be sure that you're really capable of stunning us though? Those phasers of yours look pretty small for such work.

Ensign 2: Hey, do you want us to stun you or what?

Ford smiles one of those smiles that makes other people feel that there is something horribly wrong with Things In General. After three more steps, the group of prisoners enters the middle of an intersection of two corridors. Another pair of security guards turn the corner just as Ford says ...

Ford: Stun me.

Ensign 1: (firing) You asked for it, bud!

SCENE 8:

Somewhere on their way to the Presidential Detention Suite, Ford has prompted Ensign One to fire his phaser at him, just as two other security guards turn the corner in front of them ...

Ford hits the ground and rolls back past the two ensigns. Ensign 1 accidentally stuns one of the security guards. The other guard immediately jumps the ensign.

Zaphod: Follow Ford, everyone!

Zaphod, Arthur, and Trillian race after Ford as Ensign Two emerges from the scuffle.

Ensign 2: I'm setting my phaser to 'evaporate,' Beeblebrox! Now surrender in the name of the United Federation of Planets!

Voice of the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy: *This is a good time to pause and review a section of what the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy has to say about the United Federation of Planets.*

There are several important things to remember when dealing with officers of the United Federation of Planets. The first is that they always claim to be on peaceful missions, insisting that they will not use violent means to accomplish their goals. It invariably so happens, however, that one or two (or perhaps even an entire starship of personnel) get a bit overzealous in their tasks and feel by vaporizing a prisoner or two, if not entire planets. Starfleet Command is always rather understanding about these little mishaps, even when it violates their own Prime Directive. These incidents were usually hushed up appropriately, and passed off as accidents, as in the case of the sudden and unexpected supernova of the star Turas, taking with it a few orbiting planets where Romulan ships were rumored to have been sighted.

The second important thing of note is that the United Federation of Planets is very big. Even a man like Zaphod Beeblebrox should not attempt to betray the Federation because no matter where in the known space and time he hides, the Federation is bound to find him there. In fact, if Zaphod Beeblebrox's brains were functioning correctly (e.g. he has not touched a Pan Galactic Gargle Blaster in at least 5,678.84 years), he might realize that the only reasonable way to escape the Federation is to paint himself pink, and then activate a Somebody Else's Problem Field about himself, whereupon the Federation would immediately cease to worry about him.

The third, and perhaps the most important, thing to remember about the United Federation of Planets in general, and Starfleet in particular, is that it is impossible to be served a decent Pan Galactic Gargle Blaster on any of its starship, especially when it is a Klingon that is serving you the drink. Federation food synthesizers are not capable of getting just the proper kick into the drink which leads to certain problems, as Zaphod Beeblebrox is about to discover.

Trillian: We're almost back to the shuttle bay where the Heart of Gold is being kept!

They stopped at a crossroad where three corridors are leading straight through, to their left, and to their right. The group paused to catch their breath.

Arthur: So, (pant, pant) which way (pant) do we (pant) go?

Trillian: I believe, (pant) that we (pant) ...

Ensign Two rounded the corner behind them, and, stopping, yells:

Ensign 2: I've (pant, pant) I've got you (pant, pant) now, Beeble- (pant) Beeble- (pant) Beeblebrox!

Zaphod: (running to the left) This way!

Ford: (running to the right) This way!

Both Zaphod and Ford starts to run in their respective directions. They both paused. They both looked at each other. Panting, Ensign Two raises his phaser shakily.

Zaphod: We came this way.

Ford: No, we came this way.

They both paused again, in slight confusion. They look first at the other person's direction, then at their own direction. Both decides to agree with the other, and proceeds to run in the opposite directions again.

Arthur boggled.

Ensign Two, hands shaking wildly, takes aim at Beeblebrox and fires.

Trillian pulls Arthur down, neatly dodging the phaser fire that would have ceased his crave for tea forever. Ensign One rounds the same corner behind Ensign Two. Seeing Ensign Two too late and unable to stop himself, Ensign One crashes into Ensign Two in a flurry of arms and legs.

Trillian: Here, this way!

Pulling Arthur behind her, Trillian runs down the corridor in front of them. Zaphod and Ford stared after her, shrugged, and followed.

Moments later, they arrived at the entranceway to Shuttle Bay Three.

Arthur: Let's just hope that security in there isn't as trigger happy as this ensign that has been chasing us through the last three levels...

Zaphod: Don't worry, Earthman. My brilliant plan has worked so far, hasn't it?

Ford: Your brilliant plan? I thought this was my brilliant plan.

Zaphod: Just read all about it in my memoirs, Ford. It's too long and complicated to explain right now, okay?

Trillian: (choosing this time to notice Marvin's disappearance) Say, guys, keep an eye out for Marvin. He must have been transported on this ship somewhere along with us...

Zaphod: Forget the Paranoid Android, willya kid? We can't keep worrying about where Marvin...

Zaphod suddenly stops cold.

Ford: What? Hey, Zaphod, what's the problem?

Zaphod: I feel ... very depressed at this moment.

Trillian: What?

Zaphod: Not just this moment, but I will feel depressed at every moment consecutive to this one as well...

Ford: Snap out of it, Zaphod. You're beginning to sound like Marvin.

Arthur: ...and that horrible smell. What is it?

Surprisingly, Zaphod is still holding the empty glass that once held his Pan Galactic Gargle Blaster. Trillian snatched the glass from him. The horrible smell is very obviously coming from it.

Trillian: Oh, no! Zaphod's drink wasn't mixed properly! It caused a chemical imbalance in his brains so that when he heard Marvin's name he became chronically depressed!

Ford: What can we do?

Trillian: We have to get back to the Heart of Gold immediately. I can prepare an antidote there.

Ensign 2: (catching up again) You're right in front of the shuttle bay doors, but you're not getting the chance to go in!

Zaphod: How depressing. Here I am, the most important person in the galaxy, and I can't even get into a blasted shuttle bay.

The ensign attempts to shoot Zaphod, only to discover that his phaser had just run out of batteries ("Damn! Should've used Energizer!"). Trillian quickly ushers the others into the empty shuttle bay where they board the Heart of Gold.

Will the Enterprise be able to prevent its computer from making tea? If they do, will Arthur be able to _survive_? Will Picard defeat the Borg by reading them Shakespeare? Will a towel ever come into this galactic saga? Find out, on the next exciting episode of ...

The Hitchhiker's Guide to Star Trek: The Next Generation!

[End Part 1 of 2]

The Hitchhikers Guide to Star Trek - Part 2

SCENE 9:

Last time, Zaphod and company had regained the Heart of Gold, and the Enterprise was trying to make some tea while the ever-annoying Borg crashes the party by throwing phasers at them ...

Picard: What do you mean the computer is busy making tea!?

Data: Sir, you gave the order to make some tea precisely four minutes and thirty-two seconds ago.

Picard: Dammit, I'm giving the order to stop making tea, now!

The ship rocks again as another wave of Borg's phasers further weakens the shield.

Geordi: I'm trying, sir. But it seems that whenever I kill off a tea process, another two springs up!

Picard: Then work twice as fast!

Geordi, of course, did not realize that the Nutri-Matic on the Heart of Gold has managed, through Eddie, to connect with the Enterprise's main and backup computers in an effort to synthesize a beverage that is almost, but not quite, entire not unlike tea.

Data: Sir, my reflexes are faster than Geordi's. If I connect myself to the main computer, I believe I may be able to shut down all the tea processes.

Picard: Make it so, Data, and step on it!

Data: Step on it, sir?

Picard: DO IT, DATA!

Data: Yes, sir.

Another shock wave, courtesy of the Borg, sends everyone scrambling. A Borg materializes on the bridge, grabs Picard, and disappears in a sizzle of champagne bubbles.

Riker: (activating the ship's intercom) This is Commander Riker, your friendly First Officer. This message is to inform you that Captain Picard has just been kidnapped. But don't worry, I'm now in charge of this ship.

Worf: Commander, reports of panic riots are just coming in on decks 1, 2, 5, 7 through 11 inclusive, 14, 15, 16, 20 through 25, and more or less the rest of the Enterprise.

Riker: (activating the ship's intercom again) This is Commander Riker again. I repeat, I am now in charge of this ship. There is now absolutely no reason to panic. You are in very capable hands.

Worf: Commander, there is now a major traffic jam at all routes to all shuttle bays and all emergency escape modules.

Riker: Shuttle crafts and escape modules ... of course! That will give the Borg more targets to worry about, so they wouldn't come and kidnap me as well. What a faithful and dedicated crew I have, risking their lives to save their First Officer!

The bridge crew silently registered their own opinions on this explanation.

Riker: (thinking out loud) No... I can't risk the lives of my crew to save myself. (commanding) Worf, seal off all access to shuttle bays and escape modules.

Worf: Yes, sir.

Wesley: Commander, the Borg has tractor-beamed us, and is sucking us in!

Riker: Data, how are you doing on those tea?

There is an uneasy pause.

Riker: Data?

Wesley: (reaching over to shake Data) Data, the tea!

Data: (slow, mechanical, computerized voice) tea. synthesization. in. progress. CPU. time. 96.4. percent. estimated. completion. time. ten. minutes. twenty. four. seconds. please. stand. by.

Wesley: Oh no, the computer's got Data!

Worf: Commander, the phasers have finally being armed.

Riker: Mr. Worf, fire!

An impressive array of phaser fires spread out from under the Enterprise, breaking off a loose screw on the Borg's exterior hull and lightly scratching its paint. A tiny service robot screeches out from its power plug nearby, quickly replaced the screw and, realizing that it bought with it the wrong color of paint, simply repainted the entire five square kilometers under its jurisdiction with the new color.

Riker: Mr. Worf, what's their damage.

Worf: Sir, sensors indicate that one of their service robots spilled some paint on its left mobile joint.

Riker: Good. That 'ought to hold them for awhile.

Troi: Will, the Captain is in danger!

Riker: How do you know? Are you in telepathic contact with him?

Troi: No, I can see him waving frantically at us through that window on the Borg ship.

Sure enough, the Enterprise has now being drawn uncomfortably close to the Borg vessel, and through the main viewer, they can see Picard waving frantically at them from a window, signaling in various sign languages that now would be a good time for them to beam over and rescue him. Meanwhile, a Borg comes up on him from behind, pulls him away from the window and, very obviously and with unnecessary force, pulls the shades down on them.

Wesley: Commander, I think I have detected a weakness in the Borg's system of waste management. It is ...

Riker: Their system of what?!

Wesley: Waste management, sir. It seems that the Borg have not been taking care of their environment, and some of their water supplies are now so polluted that new life forms are being created from them spontaneously, demanding welfare and voting rights.

Riker: I see, much like the East River of New York.

Wesley: Precisely, sir. And if we can form an allegiance with those life forms, we may be able to overthrow the Borg!

Riker: Excellent plan, Ensign. How can we get in contact with these new life forms?

Wesley: I will need to build a slime-communicator that can transmit spaghetti code, and ...

Riker: Okay, okay, just do it!

Wesley: Yes sir!

SCENE 10:

While Picard is busy being kidnapped, the crew of the Heart of Gold are busy trying to get back the control of their ship, and convincing Zaphod that he is, in fact, not a fish.

Zaphod: Of course I'm a fish. I'm just an insignificant little fish. The kind that people keep throwing overboard despite me keep biting the bait.

Trillian: You're talking, Zaphod. Fishes don't talk.

Zaphod: The Crotiesians on Oceania Five do, and they're fish.

Trillian: Yeah, well, but you're not Crotiesian.

Zaphod: No, the Crotiesians kicked me out of their system.

Arthur: Why?

Zaphod: They hated me. Everybody do.

Trillian: We don't.

Arthur: We don't?

Trillian: Shut up, Arthur. We don't.

Zaphod: Yes, you do. Everybody hates me. Oh, I'm sooooooo depressed.

Meanwhile, Ford has been working on the console, trying frantically to get Eddie to talk to them.

Ford: Dammit, I still can't get Eddie to talk to us.

Zaphod: You see, even a computer won't talk to me.

Trillian: It's not talking to any of us, Zaphod.

Zaphod: That's because I'm here. Just throw me overboard, and then the computer will talk to you. Don't worry about me. I'm quite used to being thrown overboard, you know. After all, I'm just an insignificant little fish that nobody wants. I'm meant to be thrown overboard.

Ford: Shut up, Zaphod. Hey Trillian, is that antidote ready yet?

Trillian: I can't make that antidote without Eddie.

Ford: Oh, great.

Arthur: Err ...

Ford: Be quiet, Arthur. Can't you see I'm trying to concentrate here? It's bad enough with two depressed heads I don't need any tea-chats as well.

Arthur: Well, I'd just like to mention that ...

Ford: Trillian, why don't you just give Zaphod a mirror, some fish pictures, and let him work it out himself.

Arthur: I think that ...

Trillian: I don't have any fish pictures.

Arthur: Does anyone know ...

Zaphod: Why would you want fish pictures when you have a fish? Oh, I see. No, you don't have to answer that. I know. You prefer pictures over me. That's understandable. After all, I'm just an insig...

Ford: Shut up, Zaphod.

Arthur: I'm just wondering ...

Zaphod: ...nificant little fish.

Arthur: Can I put a word in ...

Trillian: You're not a fish, Zaphod. Fish live in water. If you're a fish, you would've suffocated by now.

Slowly, with almost deliberated concentration, both of Zaphod's heads rise from under his hands and wobbles swimmily toward Trillian. An expression of deep concern slowly creeps upon his face like a wall of thunderclouds rolling across a late summer afternoon sky.

Arthur: Look here, I think ...

Zaphod: WATER!!!!

Gasping, two of Zaphod's hands suddenly closed in on his two throats. His third hand, with no throat to cling to, flings himself off his seat and onto the floor, thrashing himself about like a fish out of water.

Arthur, refusing to be interrupted this time, tries again.

Arthur: I think I _know_ ...

With super-Betelguesian strength Zaphod flings himself high above the floor and, on his way down, knocks Ford off his seat.

Ford: Holy Zarquon's Singing Fish!!!

Arthur: The reason why ...

Trillian: Ford! Watch what you're saying!

Ford picks up his satchel, and swings it hard at Zaphod, knocking out one of his two heads. Zaphod, still thrashing about, lands on top of Ford and knocks him down. Trillian quickly jumps Zaphod and, with a quick snap of her wrist, throws two pills of Inst-O-Snooze down his one still conscious throat. Zaphod passes out within seconds.

Both Ford and Trillian lie on the deck, panting.

Arthur: As I was saying ...

He looks around, dully expecting to be interrupted and was so surprised that he wasn't he fully forgot to finish off his sentence.

He tried again.

Arthur: As I was saying, I believe the reason why Eddie isn't talking to us, other than the fact that he still has that Stick-O-Tape over his speakers ...

He reaches over and peels off the Stick-O-Tape. The lights dim for a brief second as Eddie screams out silently in pain ...

Arthur: ... is this knob over here marked "Volume" is for some reason set to "0".

He turns up the volume.

Eddie: Ouch.

Will Riker be able to rescue Captain Picard from the Borg? Will the angry crew of the Enterprise storm the bridge demanding democracy? Will Zaphod be cured of his fishy existence and chronic depression? And now that Eddie is back, does that mean that Arthur will finally have his tea? To find out, stay tuned for the next exciting episode of ...

The Hitchhiker's Guide to Star Trek: The Next Generation!

SCENE 11:

The situation aboard the Enterprise has now become intolerable. Data is incapacitated by the computer, which is trying to manufacture tea. Wesley is attempting to communicate with slime that is living in the Borg sewer. Most importantly, Captain Picard is a hostage aboard the Borg ship where undescribly hideous things will happen to him if Riker does not come up with a plan of action soon...

Riker: So, Deanna, now that I'm the Captain, I don't see any problems with us rekindling our past intimate relationship...

Worf: (interrupting Riker purposefully) Commander Riker, sir! I have just received a report from security regarding the escape of Zaphod Beeblebrox and his associates.

Riker: What? Dammit! My first chance to actually be in command and everything goes wrong! Where are they, Worf?

Worf: They are still in the shuttle bay, sir. Auxiliary computer relays show that they are unable to leave because their computer is linked with ours.

Riker: What? Why?

Data: (turning from his console) I believe I can answer that, sir.

Riker: Data! You're okay!

Data: Yes, Commander. Is there any reason why you would believe that I have suffered some kind of harm or affliction?

Riker: Never mind, Data. Just tell me why the Heart of Gold's computer is tied in with ours.

Data: That is most interesting, sir. You see, the two computers had joined forces in order to produce a real cup of tea. When I connected to the Enterprise computer systems, I became so intrigued by the idea that I devoted my full positronic abilities to assisting them in this task. The paradox inherent in the procedure was quite interesting. By cross-circuiting...

Riker: Understood, Data. What's the current status of the computer?

Data: All systems are one hundred percent on line, Commander.

Riker: Then what are we waiting for? Mr. Worf, lock phasers on the Borg ship.

Worf: (with smug anticipation) Phasers locked, sir.

Riker: Fire!!

The Enterprise's phasers lanced out at the Borg, accidentally hitting a major power distributor, rendering a few service robots inactive. A couple more torpedoes finally managed to do more than ruining its paint job. The Borg cut off its tractor beam for a few moments to perform a minor architectural remodeling.

Troi: Will!

Riker: Not now, Deanna.

Troi: No, I feel that something horrible is happening to the Captain!

Riker: The Captain? Captain Picard? What could the Borg be doing to him?

Data: Sir, I feel that I should point out that we are the party currently inflicting possible harm onto Captain Picard.

Riker: Oops! Worf, cease fire!

Worf: (obstinantly) Is that really necessary, sir?

Riker: Now, Worf!

The phaser fire halts, but before the shields go back up, two slimy creatures materialize in the middle of the bridge. The first one, apparently the leader, is wearing its ambassador ceremonial pizza-box shorts and a ring of partly decomposed aluminum cans around the neck. He is accompanied by an assistant wearing a less glamorous half-eaten microwave-dinner suit and a non-biodegradable styrofoam cup necklace. Both are emitting an odor that is suspiciously similar to a truckload of well-aged deceased fish upon which someone had accidentally dumped a couple gallons of the O' Janx Spirit.

Wesley: I did it! I managed to communicate with an emissary from the Borg's waste system!

Emissary: We are the Slimers. We have just being created, and we are very curious about this universe. We believe in peace, justice, truth, sport, family life, and the obliteration of all other life forms!

One of the spiky, slimy, squiggly eel-like creatures immediately slings itself around Wesley's neck and then proceeds to choke him.

Data: Commander Riker, it would seem that the inhabitants of the Borg's waste system are decidedly hostile in their inter- actions with other lifeforms.

Riker: Thank you, Mr. Data, but I think that we can all see that for ourselves.

Wesley: Gyaaarrrrgggghhhh!!!!

Worf: Commander, I would like permission to go recapture the escaped prisoners. Alone this time if I may.

Riker: Permission granted, Mr. Worf. Before you go, call Dr. Crusher to the bridge. We have a combination of save-the-ailing-crew-member and your-son-is-in-mortal-danger scenario here for her. That should really give her something to work on.

SCENE 12:

Things are not going well for the Enterprise and the Heart of Gold. Picard is still kidnapped by the Borg, Zaphod still thinks he's a very depressed fish, and Wesley is still struggling with a piece of neckwear that more or less resembles a living microwave pizza grease called Slimer ...

Worf: I have hailed Dr. Crusher, Commander, although I feel it would still be better to let Wesley have a warrior's death. It would finally allow him some honor and dignity.

Riker: Thank you, Mr. Worf. Now go get the prisoners.

Worf: Yes, sir!

Worf turns and marches out while the rest of the bridge crew turns to the other Slimer.

Riker: Can't you make your fellow Slimer stop this mindless violence against Wesley? He is one of your kind!

Troi: But Will, I can sense that mindless violence is the whole purpose of their existence! Their thoughts are filled with peace ...

Slimer: Justice ...

Troi and Slimer: Truth, sport, family life, the obliteration of all other life forms ...

Slimer: And the most aromatic socks for our Kamikaze head-bands.

The second Slimer immediately slings itself at Data, who simply grabs it in mid-air. He examines the creature with some curiosity as it tries to swat at him with its tail.

Data: What should I do with it, Commander Riker?

Riker: Kill it, Data! It might get one of us!

Data: But, sir, to kill another living creature, even a murderous one, when I have it incapacitated as such, would be...

Riker draws his phaser and vaporizes the Slimer, being careful not to hit Data. He casually replaces the phaser with a shrug.

Riker: We didn't need another moral dilemma on our hands.

Troi: Perhaps you should shoot the one that is choking Wesley as well.

Wesley: Ggggggnnnnnnrrrrrrfffffkkk!!!

Riker: No, I'm afraid that there is too much risk of vaporizing Wesley with the creature. We'll just have to wait it out.

Wesley: TTTTThhhhyyyyyaaaaaaarrrrrr!

Meanwhile, On the Heart of Gold, Trillian has finally begun to synthesize a cure for Zaphod's unusual chemical imbalance with Eddie's help. Arthur and Ford stand watch outside the Heart of Gold while Trillian and Eddie continue their work.

Arthur: I don't understand why I'm constantly being left out of the problem-solving procedures around here.

Ford: Well, do you know anything about Betelguesian body chemistry?

Arthur: Well, no, not exactly, but...

Ford: How about the synaptical pathways between two brains?

Arthur: Two brains? Well, not as such as two brains, no...

Ford: Then don't worry about it, Arthur. At least out here we're safe if Zaphod wakes up and goes insane on us again.

Arthur: I rather thought the whole idea behind Zaphod was that he is supposed to be insane.

Ford: Yeah, well, I mean insane for Zaphod. I mean that if you accept his base level of insanity as being sane in Zaphod's case, then you could say that Zaphod has gone insane, I suppose.

Arthur: Then I think he has the right idea. Maybe we should go insane.

Ford: Well, the universe is a funny place. Maybe you'll get your wish someday.

Arthur: (after a pause) Ford?

Ford: Yeah?

Arthur: I think I would rather be out here than inside. It is much more peaceful here in the shuttle bay.

Suddenly, the doors to Shuttle Bay Three fly open and a growling Worf leaps in. He immediately tackles Ford, causing him to drop his satchel. Arthur steps back, timidly observing the ensuing battle. Worf tosses Ford across the floor, and leaps after him.

Will the Enterprise be able to rescue Captain Picard? Will Dr. Crusher be able to rescue Wesley? Will Trillian be able to rescue Zaphod? Will Arthur be able to rescue Ford? And finally, will anyone be able to rescue Troi from Riker? Find out, on the next exciting episode of ...

The Hitchhiker's Guide to Star Trek: The Next Generation!

SCENE 13:

The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy notes that one of the Klingon's many expertise is their skill at skeletal and organ remodeling-one of the most tricky of all modern medical specialties. The Klingons are so skilled, in fact, that with proper coercing, they will even lend out their services for free.

The Guide goes on to explain that the best way to coerce such services out of a Klingon is to simply tell the Klingon that he is, in fact, a very nice person.

Interestingly, Ford Prefect was able to coerce such services out of a Klingon without any provocation. Showing, once again, that reality is terribly mistaken and wildly inaccurate and that only The Guide is indeed the true source of all universal knowledge and wisdom.

With a single hand, Worf lifts Ford high above the head, spins him around a number of revolutions, and then lightly flicks him off with a twist of his wrist. Ford lands a few meters away like a sack of potatoes.

Ford: Omph. ARTHUR!!

Arthur: Err ...

Worf pounces on Ford and slaps him against the hull of the Heart of Gold.

Ford: Ouch! Say, Arthur ...

Worf grabs Ford and bounces him against the door to the shuttle bay.

Arthur: Ford, are you trying to tell me something?

Worf jumps on and begins choking Ford by lightly pressing his left pinky against Ford's throat.

Ford: Arthur! Ggggg-ack-get...

Arthur: Hmmm? What was that Ford? I can't really distinguish what it is that you are saying due to the ... err ... difficulties you seem to be suffocating ... I mean suffering.

Worf begins to skillfully bounce Ford on his legs, feet, and head in such a fashion that would've caused a hundred British soccer fans to break out of an Italian jail, ransack a few neighboring pubs, and launch a few ICBM's as well.

Ford: (mouth jibbering) Sssatcheerrrk!

Arthur: Ah, I see! Am I correct in deducing that you are requesting my help with your current ... (he pauses in search for the right word) ... engagement, and that you would like me to, ummm, pass you your satchel?

Ford frantically nods his head as Worf slides his face along the wall.

Arthur: Well,...I'll just go over there, and, uhm, get the satchel, then ...

Worf grabs Ford and wipes the floor with him (literally). Arthur scurries past them and gets the satchel. He quickly opens it and examines the contents.

Arthur: Let's see, the Sub-Etha Sens-O-Matic and signaling device, some peanuts, twenty pounds, some rather compromising pictures of a brunette I once saw you dating, the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, an improbable number of credit cards, and a towel.

Ford: (flying into another wall) The towel! Give me the towel!

Worf starts toward Ford again.

Arthur: (tossing Ford the towel) Ford, I really don't think that this is the appropriate time for bath apparel. I fail to see what ...

Arthur is cut short by a savage snarl from Worf, who leaps by Arthur a bit too close for comfort. Arthur snaps the satchel shut and retreats to the Heart of Gold. While he is retreating, however, he manages to trip over his own feet. Just when Arthur should be about to hit the ground, he catches a glimpse of the rather distracting sight of Ford Prefect dancing with his towel.

This, of course, causes Arthur to completely miss the ground.

Arthur bobbed in the air as Worf attacked Ford yet again. Ford jumped to the side and, holding on to the two opposite edges of his towel, binds it around Worf's head and then leaps onto his back. With one swift motion and a rather un-nerving growl, Worf throws Ford over his shoulders and narrowly missing the wobbily floating Arthur Dent. Arthur bobbed slightly higher as Worf leaps under him after Ford. Luckily for Arthur, the law of physics is too busy concentrating on the Klingon suddenly slamming into Ford Prefect's chest to notice him resting at his somewhat unusual altitude.

Ford quickly wraps the towel around Worf's throat, and shuts it tight. Worf stands up unhurriedly and, with another Enterprise-shattering growl, rips the towel away from his neck. Holding Ford by his cuff, Worf shook and shook until Ford thought he's seeing five Eccentrica Gallumbits strip-teasing in the background.

While Ford and Worf continue to struggle, or, more accurately, while Worf continues to shook and Ford continues to wriggle, Arthur has gotten the hang of this flying stuff once again. He floats over to Worf and gives him a swift kick on the back of the head. Worf collapses noiselessly to the ground; Ford and his towel land rather awkwardly underneath him.

Ford: (panting) Good work, Arthur. Rather brilliant of you ... to decide to fly ...

Arthur: Ahem. Thank you, Ford, but I ...

Ford: Now, how 'bout help me get out (cough) from this Klingon mess ...

Meanwhile Trillian, with the help of Eddie, has brought sanity (or insanity, depends on one's private View of Things) back to Zaphod, who is now standing in the Heart of Gold and beaming out brightly at the ensemble in the Shuttle Bay. Trillian stands a little behind him.

Zaphod: (giving out a little laugh) Hi guys, what's beating you?

Startled, Arthur twirled around to face Zaphod, slightly losing his balance.

Trillian: My God, Arthur, you can't possibly be flying!

Now freed from the myriad of exercises that Worf had been giving it the last five minutes or so, The law of physics suddenly glances sharply at Arthur, demanding to know what in the universe he thinks he's doing up there, and suddenly the ground greets Arthur's jaw with the sort of smug self-righteousness you would expect from the ground when it sees the law of gravity (even artificial gravity) blatantly denied, then suddenly corrected.

Arthur: I think we should probably get back to the Heart of Gold. Now.

They found that they had to carry Ford into the ship.

SCENE 14:

Meanwhile, on the bridge of the Enterprise, Dr. Beverly Crusher has just arrived at the bridge.

Beverly: Oh my God, Commander, you've got to save my son!

Riker: But I'm too busy trying to save the Captain right now. Which one do you want me to save first?

Beverly: Oh. Err ...

Suddenly, the Slimer loses grip on Wesley, and drops to the deck, gasping.

Slimer: Slime! Grease! Hazardous nuclear wastes! Cough, cough!

Wesley, now disengaged from Slimer, runs into Beverly's open arms as the two closes in for a sentimental embrace.

Troi: Ohhh ... how sweet. This is such a touching moment *snif*.

Slimer: This place is too dry, too clean! I need water, great rolling tides of black, polluted water! Seas! Seas of pizza cartons! Oceans of spilled crude oil and hazardous waste drums!

Data: I believe the creature is dying, sir.

Riker pulls out his phaser and vaporizes Slimer.

Riker: (shrugs) Just putting it out of its misery.

Wesley and Beverly continues to hug vigorously.

Riker: Okay, Wes, now take your stations. We're going to rescue Captain Picard.

Wesley: (disengaging from Beverly) Yes sir.

Riker: Load phasers and torpedoes, lock on target, and fire!

Wesley: Weapons fired, Commander.

There was a few blasts of orange-red explosions as the Enterprise's weapons hit a few Borg landscape designers out on the hull surveying the ship's exterior tower formation and arguing heatedly over the degree of curvatures necessary for the service robot pathways in order to achieve maximum karma enjoyment.

Riker: Data, damage report.

Data: Scanning, sir.

Wesley: Commander!

Wesley is pointing at the main viewer, where they can see the Borg ship slowly deteriorating. Bits and pieces are floating off its hull. Lights are flashing on and off uncertainly, then decide to simply cease functioning.

Troi: It's dying, I can feel it! It's so ... oh!

Troi suddenly collapses onto the deck, weeping. Dr. Crusher kneels down beside her, and runs her Sens-O-Medic over her body. She then throws up her hands hopelessly.

Beverly: Sorry, Commander. Everything checks out normal. There's nothing I can do.

Data: Counselor Troi is correct, Commander. Sensors are indicating that the Borg is losing power at an astounding rate.

Wesley: Yes! We did it! We've destroyed the Borg!

Data: But what about the Captain?

Riker: There's nothing we can do about him now. I guess I'll just have to take over from now on. Data, turn the ship around. Let's get out of here.

Wesley: Sir, the Borg is hailing us.

Riker: What? Oh, err ...

Wesley: It's probably the Borg asking for the terms of surrender.

Riker: Really? Oh, okay. Data, open visual transmissions on screen.

On the main viewer, a dismayed, limping, slouching, metallic figure walks up the Borg's remaining operating camera. In the background, they can see dense, acrid smokes fast filling the entire Borg ship. The figure seems to be dragging something heavy behind him.

Figure: Hello there.

Will Zaphod and company finally be able to escape? Will Worf force himself into the Heart of Gold before they can do so? Is Captain Picard dead? Will Troi ever recover from her grief over ... what? And finally, who is this mysterious metallic figure who hailed them from the Borg? For the answers to these, and many other, non-towel-related questions, watch for the next exciting _CONCLUSION_ of ...

The Hitchhiker's Guide to Star Trek: The Next Generation!

SCENE 15:

On the Heart of Gold, Ford is moaning and groaning in the sickbay while Zaphod attempts to reason with Eddie ...

Zaphod: Tell me again why I can't just leave.

Eddie: Because we still have to get Marvin.

Zaphod: Marvin is gone. Poof. Blitzbo. Nobody knows where he is.

Eddie: I do.

Zaphod: Good for you. Now let's take us out of here, okay?

Trillian: Wait, Zaphod. Eddie, why don't you tell us where Marvin is.

Zaphod: Is this really necessary?

Trillian: Yes. Now Eddie, where's Marvin?

Eddie: I'll show you.

The main viewer on the Heart of Gold comes alive. At first, all they can see is a dense fog of acrid smoke. Then, from within the smoke, they can make out a dismayed, limping, slouching, metallic figure slowly emerging from the smoke. He seems to be dragging something heavy behind him.

Arthur, Trillian, Zaphod: Marvin!

Marvin: Hello there.

Trillian: Marvin, where are you?

Marvin: Me? Oh, I'm just over here at the Borg's ship. Pretty smart of you to drop me here when the improbability drive kicked in.

Zaphod: Zowee! You were over there with the scourge of the galaxy, Marvin? It must have been exciting! Think of the danger!

Marvin: Don't talk to me about excitement.

Trillian: We didn't know you were there, honest. It was the improbability field ...

Marvin: Sure, sure. That's what they all say. 'We didn't know that, Marvin'. 'We hope it won't inconvenience you too much, Marvin'. 'We didn't know you were standing under that 50-ton weight when we dropped it, Marvin'. That's all right, you don't have to explain. I'm quite used to it.

Trillian: Marvin, we've been worried about you.

Marvin: Don't pretend that you care about me. It won't work. Nobody likes me. Not even (he waves his hand around) this ship.

Trillian: The Borg? What happened to the Borg?

Marvin: Out of boredom, I hooked myself in with the Borg's collective intelligence. I quickly became bored of the monotony of the Borg technology and attempted to hold a conversation with the Borg central processing unit.

Trillian: Wow. And ...

Marvin: We had the most enlightening conversation about the relationship between outdoor landscape architectural design and Hinduism.

Zaphod: Hey, Marvin. That's great! (whispers to Trillian) What in Zarquon's Flooding Bathtub is he talking about?

Marvin: As I said, the ship didn't like me. The subject of Hinduism lead to the discussion to my personal view of the universe, and ...

Trillian: ... And?

Marvin: and the ship became so depressed it committed suicide.

Zaphod: All right, Marvin! Way to go, kid!

Marvin: Don't start patronizing me.

Trillian: Still, that doesn't explain the architectural failure that the Borg is undergoing ...

Marvin: I have something that should explain that, too. (Marvin pulls out a panel that was strapped to his back.) I took this off the central processing unit. Would you like me to read it to you? It seems like the least that I can do. It will only be another menial task that my vast intellectual capacity be called upon to perform. It's always 'Marvin, would you scratch my back?', or 'Marvin, would you stick your hand in to check the temperature of my bath?', or 'Marvin, would you mind going over there and rescuing that Starfleet Captain?'. Here I am, brain the size of a planet, and they ask me to ...

Zaphod: What does it say, Marvin?

Trillian appears to be puzzled by something that Marvin had just said ...

Marvin: Oh, I suppose that I should just get to the point, shouldn't I? I mean, why am I even bother complaining, with this pain down on all the diodes on my left side ...

Zaphod: (warningly) Marvin ...

Marvin: Yes, of course. It says, (reading) Another fine product of the Sirius Cybernetics Corporation.

Trillian and Zaphod thought about this reflectively, then nodded in comprehension. Yes, it all makes sense now.

Trillian: No doubt they'll be the first against the wall when the revolution comes.

Zaphod: Yeah, no doubt.

Trillian continuously to be puzzled by something that Marvin had mentioned earlier ...

Marvin: Anyway, the only reason that I called ...

Trillian: Marvin, Did you said something about a Starfleet Captain?

Marvin: As I was saying ... (he paused just long enough for effect) the only reason that I called is because I think I have something that you might like to take back.

Zaphod: Yeah, kid? What is it?

Marvin holds up the limp figure of Captain Picard, whom he had been dragging behind him.

Marvin: (indicating the Captain) This.

Trillian: Isn't that Captain Picard?

Zaphod: Hey, yeah. What's he doing over there?

Marvin: (looking at the unconscious Picard) Not much.

Eddie: Hey, gang. The Enterprise is beaming Marvin and the Captain over. Should I intercept the transmission for you?

On the main viewer, they see that both Marvin and Picard begins to fade as the transporter kicks in to bring them back.

Trillian: Yes, Eddie. Bring Marvin here. We don't need the Captain.

Zaphod: Hey, I thought I was in charge here!

Moments later, Marvin alone appears on the Heart of Gold.

Marvin: You didn't have to do that, you know.

He slouches to his corner.

SCENE 16:

While Marvin was being transported to the Heart of Gold, Captain Picard appears on the bridge of the Enterprise. Dr. Crusher quickly jumps in, runs her Sens-O-Medic over the Captain, and gives him a dose of Inst-A-Wake on the neck.

Picard: What happened, Number One.

Riker: Captain, I have rescued you from the Borg.

Data: Correction, Commander. It appears that the Captain was rescued by the robot named Marvin, who is now in Shuttle Bay Three.

Riker: I thought I gave the orders to transport him directly to detention.

Data: You did, Commander. But the Heart of Gold intercepted that signal.

Riker: What? I thought Worf took care of those prisoners.

Data: Apparently not, sir. My sensors are showing that the Heart of Gold is now firing up their improbability drive.

Picard: (rising from the deck) Okay, I'm fine now. Data, come with me. We're going to Shuttle Bay Three.

Beverly: But Captain, I need to run more checks on you. After all, the Borg might have ...

Picard: Borgified me? Nonsense! They treated me rather well. All they wanted was my opinion on this screenplay for Hamlet that they've worked out. It was an excellent script, but I thought that their soliloquys can use a tad more ...

Riker: Sir ...

Picard: Yes, Number One?

Riker: The prisoners, sir. Zaphod Beeblebrox on Shuttle Bay Three.

Picard: Oh yes, (clears his throat) "I hold my duty, as I hold my soul." That was Polonius in Hamlet, Number One. Come, Data, speaking as Cade in Henry VI, "our enemies shall fall before us!"

Picard and Data marches into the turbo-lift.

Beverly: Yep, he's fine, all right.

The twin door of the turbo-lift closes in on Picard and Data just as the bridge starts to twist out of shape, the reason being that the Heart of Gold has just kicked in their improbability drive. On the Heart of Gold, Ford is rapidly having his body parts readjusted as Zaphod works out, or rather, have Eddie work out, the improbability factors necessary to take them to their next stop.

Arthur strolls leisurely back to his quarters where he finds, much to his delight, four tiny bone china tea cups on four tiny bone china saucers surrounding a tiny bone china tea kettle containing the best tea that he had ever had. There is also a small note in Old English calligraphy saying, "Share and Enjoy".

Ford was right. Arthur's wish has finally been realized.

He was also alarmed for a moment to find a somewhat confused cow standing rather awkwardly in his closet, but the admonition rapidly fades away as he realizes that the only cloth he has is the dressing gown that he is currently, and has been for as long as he can now remember, wearing.

Zaphod: (over the ship's intercom) All this adventure has made me hungry. How 'bout you, monkey man?

Arthur: (sipping his tea, a dazed, content amusement on his face) Yeah, that sounds fine.

Zaphod: Okay, then. Let's take a quick bite at Milliway's, the Restaurant at the End of the Universe!

EPILOGUE: Data and Picard arrives at Shuttle Bay Three just in time to see the Heart of Gold vanishes in a sudden and unexpected tropical torrential downpour. They help the overly wet and slightly dazed Lieutenant Worf off his feet.

Data: Beeblebrox and the others have escaped, sir.

Picard: I see, Mr. Data.

Data: I wish I could have the opportunity to converse with the robot named Marvin. He seems to have a ... personality.

Picard: Well, Data. Perhaps it's for the best ...

Holding Worf, Picard turns to leave.

Data: Captain, wait!

Picard: What is it, Data?

Data: (picking up a black book with the words "Don't Panic" written in large friendly letters on the cover) The Heart of Gold left this behind.

Picard: (Taking the book and examining it) What is it?

Data: I believe that it is called the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy, sir. It is a wholly remarkable book. In fact, it is probably the most remarkable book ever to come out of the great publishing corporations of Ursa Minor. Not only is it a wholly remarkable book, it is also a highly successful one-more popular than the 'Celestial Home Care Omnibus,' better selling than 'Fifty-three More Things to Do in Zero Gravity,' and more controversial than Oolon Colluphid's trilogy of philosophical blockbusters, 'Where God Went Wrong,' 'Some More of God's Greatest Mistakes,' and 'Who Is This God Person Anyway?'

Picard: Intriguing, Mr. Data, please continue.

Data: Well, sir, in many of the more relaxed civilizations on the Outer Eastern Rim of the Galaxy ...

* * * T h e E n d * * *

[Data's explanation of the Hitchhiker's Guide quoted from the preface to the Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy by Douglas Adams]