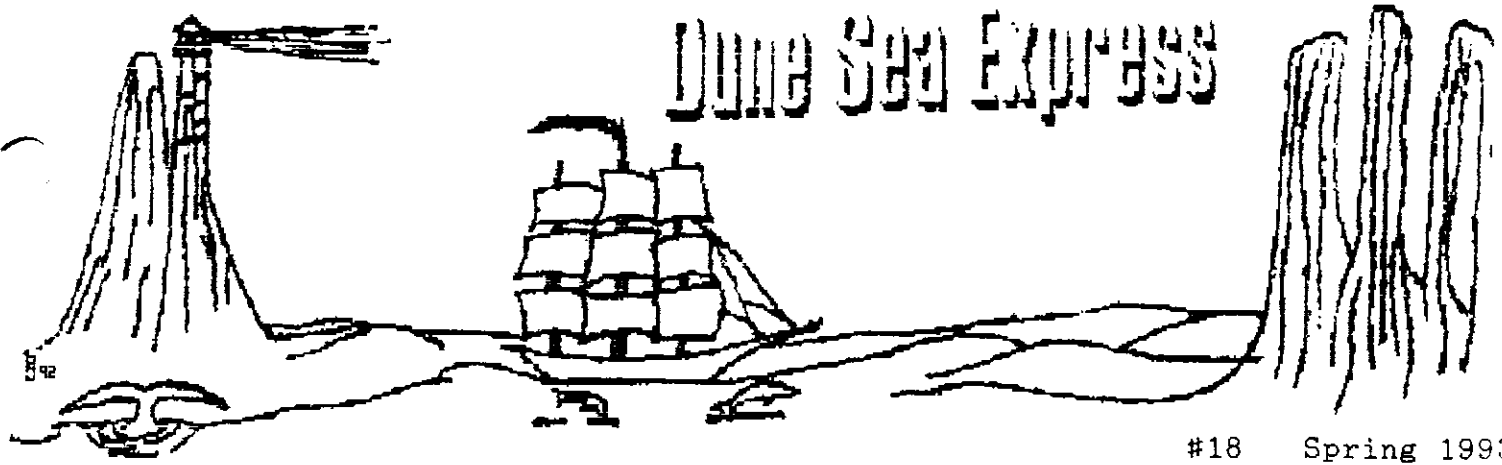
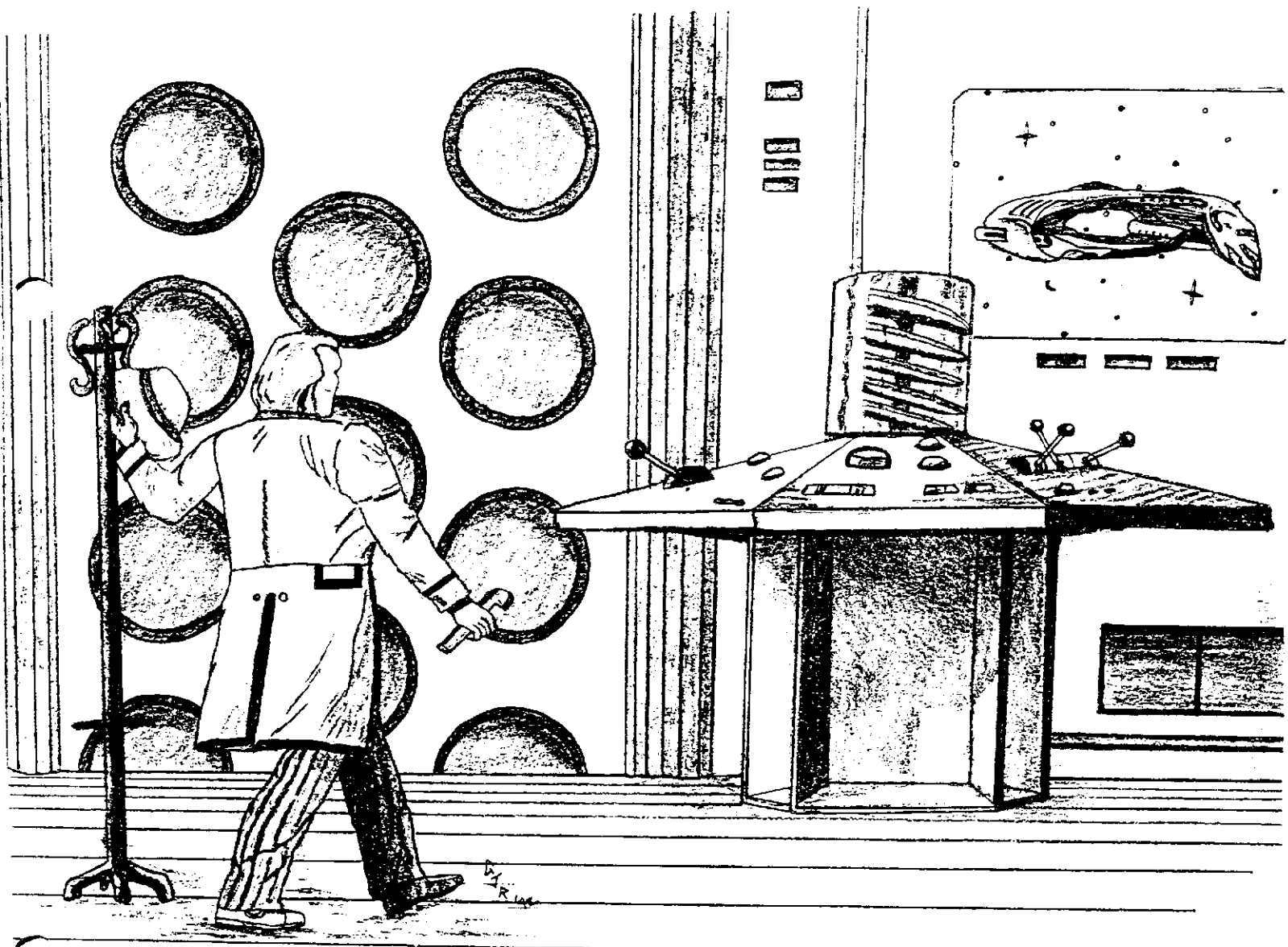


# Dune Sea Express



#18 Spring 1993



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	Page
The Evolution Dilemma Part 4.....	3
By Ted Foster	
Art for The Evolution Dilemma.....	6
By Greg Rowe	
"Confusion".....	8
By Douglas Wilson	
Critique-al Mass.....	9
By Tony and Mark discuss "The Omega Glory"	
Doctor Who art.....	11
By Gary Geick	
Cartoon.....	12
By Robert Simms	
Note about the new Who novels.....	12
Blueprints of Replicator Station, Computer Clipboard,.....	13
and Crystal Memory Chip by Gary Geick	
Suggestions For the Spacefaring Insomniac.....	15
Ted Foster reviews <u>Relics</u>	
Suggestions For the Spacefaring Insomniac.....	16
Sandra reviews <u>Best Destiny</u>	
Cover Art by Greg Rowe	

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ATTENTION DSE WRITERS AND ARTISTS:

Due to changes in the DSE's preparation and printing schedule the deadline is being moved up for persons that must mail their submissions (ie. If it comes through the U.S. Post Office or UPS.) Anything not recieved by the deadline date will not appear in the issue. It may appear in the next issue if I'm feeling generous. (Can anybody tell the editor is having trouble with the postal service?)

the new deadlines are:

June 1 issue - April 23rd  
Sept 1 issue - July 23rd  
Dec 1 issue - Oct 22nd

For persons in the San Angelo area who deliver their materials in person the deadlines remain the same as before but early arrivals are always appreciated.

# The Evolution Dilemma

## Part 4

By Ted Foster

*In Previous Parts:* Captain Picard's riding lesson was interrupted by a distress call from Derallium II, a colony endangered by an asteroid on a collision course. The Enterprise crew comes up with a plan to pull the asteroid off its course with the help of thruster modules attached to the asteroid's surface. The Enterprise also enlists the help of the Pegasus, a fighter carrier commanded by Captain Marschall, and the Solstice, a Betazoid passenger ship. If they cannot move the asteroid off its course the colony will have to be evacuated.

To make matters worse Coordinator Effingham tells Picard that should the planet be evacuated they will not leave the native species that the colonists have been doing genetic experimentation on in an attempt to raise them to sentience.

Also both the Enterprise and the Pegasus have detected an unknown ship in the vicinity. A cloaked ship that seems to be monitoring their activities.

When the Pegasus arrives at Derallium II the Enterprise officers beam over to discuss the contingency plans.

Captain Marschall gave Picard and Riker a quick tour of his ship on the way back to the transporter room. After visiting the bridge and Medical, Marschall paused by two doors which resembled those of the Enterprise's holodecks. "I think this may interest you Commander," he said and gestured for Riker to enter. When the doors opened, Riker stepped forward into a launch bay.

Or what he thought was a launch bay. Realizing he was in the wrong part of the ship for this, it dawned on him that the bay and the Thunderbird attack ship in front of him must be some sort of simulator. Marschall saw the recognition dawn on his face as he and Picard followed. "It simulates our craft in every way from launch to recovery. Care to give it a try?" Marschall's eager grin was mildly challenging.

Riker smiled and said, "with pleasure!" He turned to face the craft and said, "Computer, please provide me with a flight suit and bio interface." Both items appeared before him immediately.

Marschall turned to a console on the wall of the "Bay Control Room" behind the launch area. As Riker changed, he heard Marschall address the panel. "Kai, who is in simulator two? Enlahr? Good. Tell him to expect company in 5 minutes." As Will adjusted his helmet, Marschall keyed into his communications frequency. "Once out there, you will be able to engage one of our new pilots if you wish."

Great, thought Will. One old cadet jock against a new one. Riker glanced back at Picard.

Giving in to temptation, his Captain spoke into the com panel, "Just remember, Number One. The pride of the Enterprise is on your shoulders."

With a wicked look, Will answered back, "As long as there is so little pressure, Sir, it should be a pleasant trip!" He climbed into his cockpit. The controls were very familiar being nearly identical to those in the attack craft he had flown before. He began the power up sequence, closed his hatch, and checked his weapons. Compared with the old Talon Class, the Thunderbird was much better armed and maneuverable at high speed. Warp capable for short periods, it posed a serious threat to ships even as large as a modern destroyer. Unlike the fighter craft of old, the energy weapons on this bird could fire in any direction. Armed with linear phasers and four small torpedoes, the modern version of the dogfight with these craft was a study in evasion, surprise, and quick death.

"Alright Commander, your craft shows ready and you have a green light for launch," came Captain Marschall's voice over the headset. "Your opponent is currently near the Lagrange point toward the first moon. Good luck."

Riker checked his tracking display which would be linked to that of the Pegasus in real flight, and noted the planet it was orbiting and its three moons. Final checks on his inertia dampeners, engines, life support, and scanners showed him that the craft was indeed ready for launch.

"Launching," he said matter of factly into his helmet microphone. Touching a control, he was thrown back into his seat by the force of the launch. The bay disappeared behind him, and he had a brief view of the lower part of the Pegasus' saucer section flying by above him. To all his senses after that he appeared to be accelerating out into space along a high polar orbit. Checking his inertia dampeners one more time, he adjusted them so that the maximum force he would feel was three g's. Although he could almost eliminate it, the feeling of movement helped him to become one with the craft.

How would his opponent react to his current course? He thought about what he would do in the other fellow's position, and then a plan began to come together in his mind to counter it. This was what he had enjoyed most about flying these small craft in combat simulations. Estimating that the other fighter would have dropped from the LaGrange point to a low orbit on the far side of the planet, he continued his course and readied his torpedoes to fire aft.

Crossing the terminator into night, he punched a new course into this flight computer. As his craft continued "north-west" over the surface it closed with the planet's northern magnetic pole which would pass to his starboard side. Upon passing the pole and turning southward, a glance at the scanners revealed what he had anticipated. Diving through the cone of the planet's strong magnetic field, his opponent's Thunderbird emerged like a pewter dart. The other pilot had timed his maneuver very well coming in behind and below Riker's craft. His sensors further showed that both phasers and torpedoes on that craft were powered up.

Reacting swiftly, Will activated the course computer. His thrusters screamed as the fighter surged to starboard on a new heading while maintaining its orbital velocity. He then changed his inertia dampeners to a setting of 9 g's maximum, and diverted the freed power into his shields. Pulling harder to starboard, the ship tightened its circular course and heading for the magnetic wall of the pole.

His efforts paid off as phaser fire slammed into his aft shields, but due to the extra power they held. The fire ceased as his opponent tried to follow his circular course. He fired two volleys of his photorps to the rear to throw off his pursuer. With a satisfied grin he saw the other craft begin a violent evasive track. Then, continuing his turn, his ship plunged into the magnetic well and away from the other fighter's sensors.

While cloaked he reversed his turn and forced himself into practiced breathing as his flight suit strained to make up for the massive pressure that the dampeners were no longer absorbing. Feeling like his internal organs were in a race to get into his shoes, he kept up the turn. With a little luck he would emerge from the magnetic haze to find his opponent just finishing his evasives at the same orbital level.

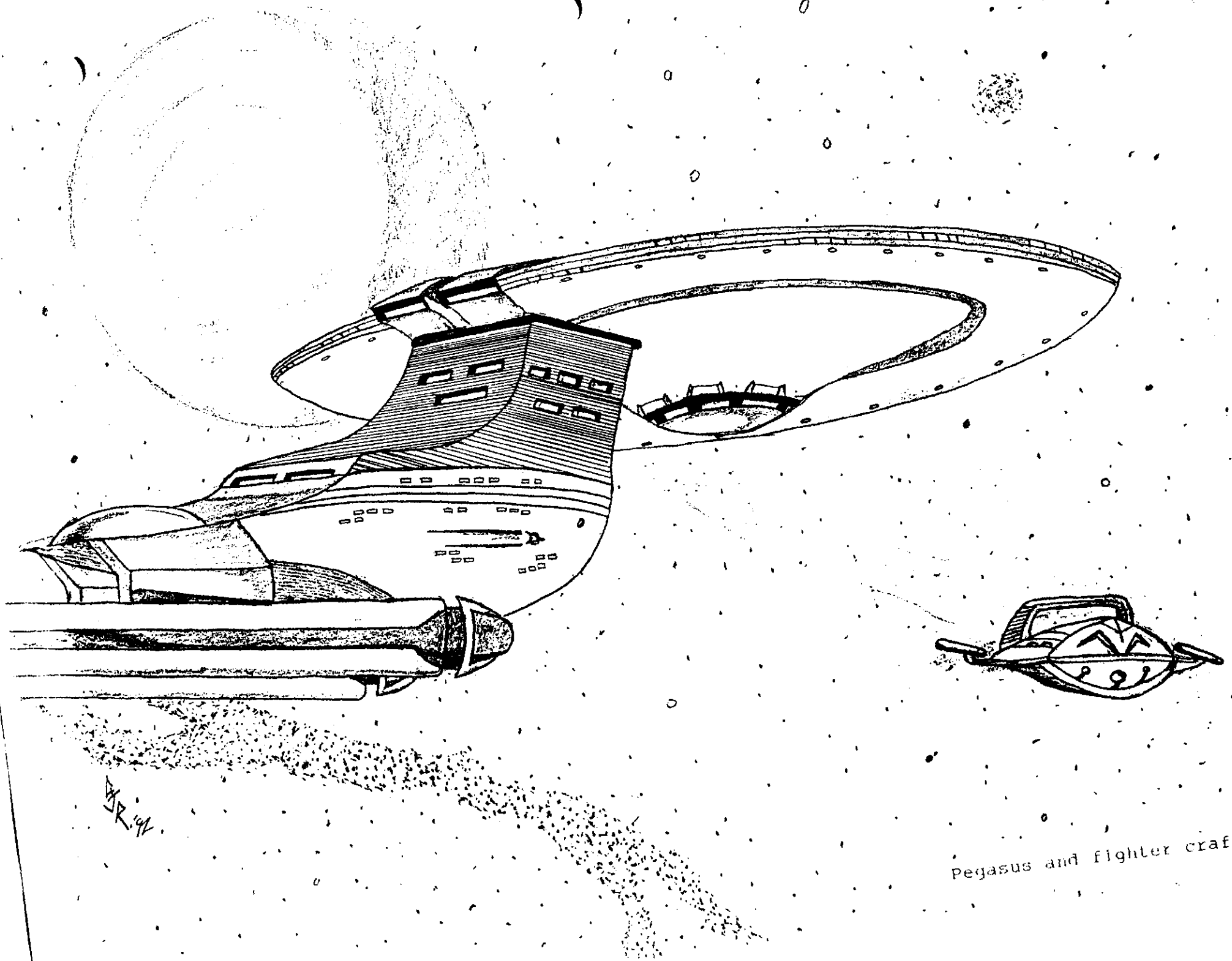
Clearing the pole's effects, though, showed no ship ahead. A brief moment of uncertainty followed, but that was dashed by the proximity warning alarm in his ear. A look at his holographic display showed the other fighter screaming in from a higher orbit. Its scan showed that its inertia systems were all but turned off, but it had to be pulling a turn of 35 g's or more. He realized too late that the remaining power on the other fighter was also now set to its weapons as well. High energy bursts of phaser fire took out his shields in an instant while a single photon torpedo hit him astern to finish the job. His cockpit went white...

...and then returned to normal with a blank screen in front of him. His chronometer displayed that the entire action had taken less than three minutes. Opening the cockpit hatch, he looked behind the simulator to see Picard and Marschall still standing in the control area. Picard looked impressed, but puzzled as well. Apparently, he had noticed the anomalies in the other fighter also.

Captain Marschall stepped forward as Will began to get out of his flying gear. "Perhaps you are interested in meeting your opponent, eh?"

With a suspicious look Riker said, "Indeed I am, Sir. I feel like I missed something essential." When he had finished changing, they continued through an adjoining door into the neighboring simulator and everything fell into place.

"Hortas?!" Riker said incredulously. Before him were five of the silicon beings including one which was on a lift to aid in its removal from the fighter's cockpit. All had translators on their fronts and the uniform markings of lieutenants, and all were quietly laughing and twittering.



Pegasus and fighter craft

"Yes, Commander, Hortas. The Federation's ultimate fighter pilot. What other beings can go almost completely without life support, take a 40 g turn without batting a whisker, and eject from his ship without an escape capsule? Not to mention the fact that they are used to living in a three dimensional environment rather than eh two dimensional one us surface dwellers are raised in. Come." He moved on to the other pilot.

"Lieutenant Enlahr, allow me to introduce Commander William Riker."

The Horta turned slightly, then in a pleasant voice replied, "A pleasure, Commander."

Marschall cleared his throat and then added, "This was your opponent for today's exercise, Enlahr."

Riker couldn't be sure, but the Horta gave all the signs of being stunned. It quickly shifted one way, then the other, then managed to stammer through its vocoder, "Y-You, Sir? As, well, you really had me going there when I thought I had an easy initial shot."

The other Hortas were obviously enjoying their mate's discomfort, and quiet laughter came through loud and clear on the translators. Riker had to grin. Unknowingly shooting down a superior officer, especially a full Commander, was not recommended as a way to influence that officer. But making the cadet sweat for this wasn't right.

"You did a great job out there, Enlahr. Saving that turn until I was most vulnerable was impressive," Riker told him.

Enlahr seemed to relax, and with a hint of relief said, "I hope we get a chance to duel again sometime. It was a pleasure to meet you, sir."

Marschall dismissed him and with a sound like a bulldozer moving over glass Enlahr moved off to join his squadron mates. Murmured kidding about "Way to get the attention of the Brass!" and "Had to show off, didn't you fleshhead!" could be heard.

Marschall chuckled as he watched him go. "I really shouldn't have flustered him that way. Though I know better, part of me is not really convinced that an exasperated Horta wouldn't accidentally melt his way through my deck."

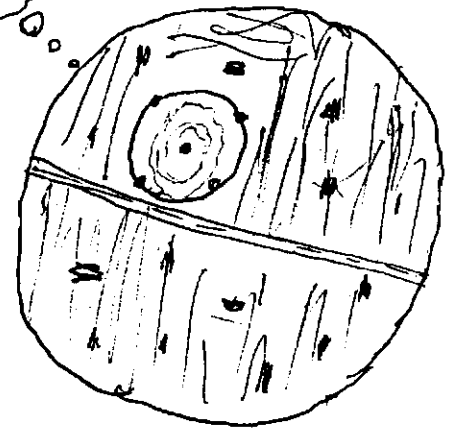
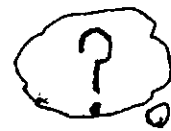
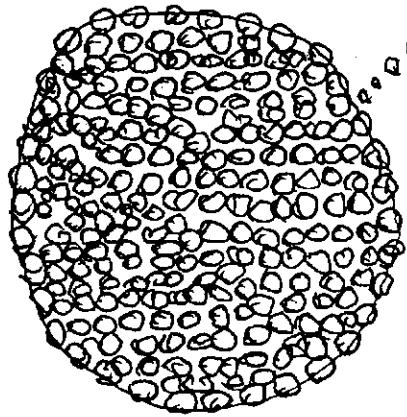
The trio of humans left the simulator, and Marschall escorted them to the transporter room. With Riker remaining behind, Picard rejoined the rest of his officers and beamed back to the Enterprise. As Will turned to follow Marschall to the Pegasus' bridge, the captain turned to him and said, "Don't feel too bad about that simulation. You made some very good initial moves. Besides, there was really nothing you could have done."

Riker was surprised to hear that from a pilot of Marschall's talents. "Why do you say that?"

With a malicious grin, Marschall concluded, "because, my good Commander, you were caught between a Rock and a Hard Place."

To Be Continued...





# *Critique-al Mass*

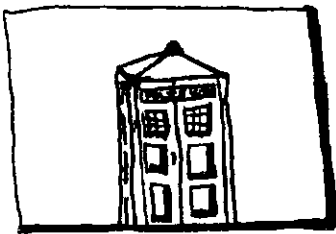
By Tony Steele and Mark Gillespie

In a concentrated effort to be fair, this month, Tony and Mark debate the merits of the classic Trek episode "The Omega Glory".

- M: I couldn't stand that episode. I mean, it's ok. It's not as bad as say... "Plato's Stepchildren" but it's just ok.
- T: It's classic Gene Roddenberry, Gene's finest.
- M: Oh, I agree it's classic Roddenberry. But it's not a great piece of art that we should sit in awe of.
- T: I would argue that "Omega Glory" is probably one of the greatest episodes that Star Trek ever did. One with the fewest technical flaws and it was one of the few shows of its time that showed patriotism in a negative light. It addressed the issue of patriotism versus rationality and the necessity of thinking for oneself.
- M: They were looking for people and they found a bunch of Folger's Crystals on the floor. McCoy scans them and says, Oh these are the people, this is what you turn into when you take out all the water. You turn into white clumpy Folger's Crystals.
- T: Instant crewmen, just add water.
- M: Well, the episode may have had good ideas but it was so cliché; we had yet another renegade starship captain going around breaking the prime directive yet again, and yet again we beam down and, of course, they get captured. And, of course, the red shirt gets killed. I mean Kirk didn't do anything in that episode, Capt. Tracy did everything.
- T: He made a great punching bag and isn't that one of the first episodes where they show the phaser effect of the person disappearing?
- M: Maybe. He glowed and disappeared, AUGHHH!, when he got shot.
- T: I've always wondered where the phaser power packs were kept after that episode. They bring these huge clips in and say these are the power packs that are drained. But the phasers they were using were the little bitty ones. Where are they kept on those little things. I want to know.
- M: That sounds like a technical flaw to me. You just said that this episode had virtually no technical flaws.
- T: (Laughs) Oh well, what can I say?
- M: Ok, "The Fountain of Youth" storyline, that is the oldest science fiction plot ever created.
- T: But they hadn't used it previously on Star Trek.
- M: That doesn't matter Star Trek was supposedly hailed as having all of these original concepts and this episode didn't have any. The idea of negative patriotism is there, but they surrounded it with bad, crappy science fiction clichés that detracted. The only good thing was that Kirk got to over act. With the big speech about how the words "We the People.." are for everybody not just one group. And then they duel to the death. Another cliché!!

- T: The duel to the death is a common theory among those who believe that might is always right. The strongest will always be the right person. The story is trying to point out that the right do not always triumph. I think that it addressed the hopelessness of the time, it said that there was a way, then than "They're right, I'm wrong" or "I'm right and They're wrong" It says that we all have something to bring to the table in life and we shouldn't kill each other just because we have disagreements. That's why they used the preamble of the Constitution, because it has to do with the rights of the individual, not the rights of the party, or state. I think that it addressed the mood of the time and in fact, it fits in right now with the current trend of people going around saying that "my country is better than yours"; ethnic cleansing and all that stuff. I think it is a deep episode.
- M: This is supposed to be a great and wonderful message, but we never saw the other side. We saw the Yang point-of-view and Captain Tracy running around shooting everybody and spouting insane ravings. And it's not clear if he caused the bloody carnage or if it had been going on.
- T: The carnage had been going on and the Coms were losing when Tracy came down. In fact they probably would have lost the first battle if it hadn't been for Capt. Tracy's interference with the prime directive. He used his phaser to drive off the superior Yang forces. Come on Mark, aren't you even going to argue about how hokey it was that the United States existed on another planet...
- M: Oh that's right, yet another parallel planet. How many have we had on this show? We couldn't just have Earth. There have to be other Earths. But this is really pushing it. WE had to have all these planets just like Earth and all of them were miserable. The basis of this show was that after we had gone through several wars and stuff, we come out of it ok and rise like the phoenix from the ashes of our former society.
- T: It's just the time from which it came and that sentiment exists today. It's interesting to notice that even in Next Gen they indicate that we have a dark period ahead of us, although that time keeps getting pushed backwards. We only have four years to build and launch the Botany Bay.
- M: Obviously in the parallel universe NASA got more funding than they do here.
- T: They didn't put Dan Quayle in charge of it either.
- M: Hey! (political fits are thrown by all.)
- M: meanwhile back at the ranch...
- T: Hoss, throw me that screwdriver, would ye please?
- M: I do agree with you, yes there was a message, but unfortunately everything around it was so hokey. And the mind meld went on forever and the episode dragged horribly. By the time we got to Kirk's big speech, I was so bored I was hoping the whole planet would just blow up. The plot ruined me. I can't watch it.
- T: I disagree, I don't think it's hokey, it did get a little sappy but I like the message and I enjoyed it.
- M: Well, that's your job.





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## Who Note

The following is a list of the New Adventures of Doctor Who novels that will be released through August. If you need to order them they are listed under "New Adventures of Doctor Who" in the Ingram microfisch. The older titles still in stock are listed under "Doctor Who" or "Dr. Who" depending on which employee entered them into the computer.

Transit (Feb. already recieved in San Angelo. I could not order it however because we could not find it in Ingram's listings. The ISBN is: 0 426 20384 4.)

The Highest Science (Mar)

The Pit (Apr)

Deceit (May)

Lucifer Rising (June)

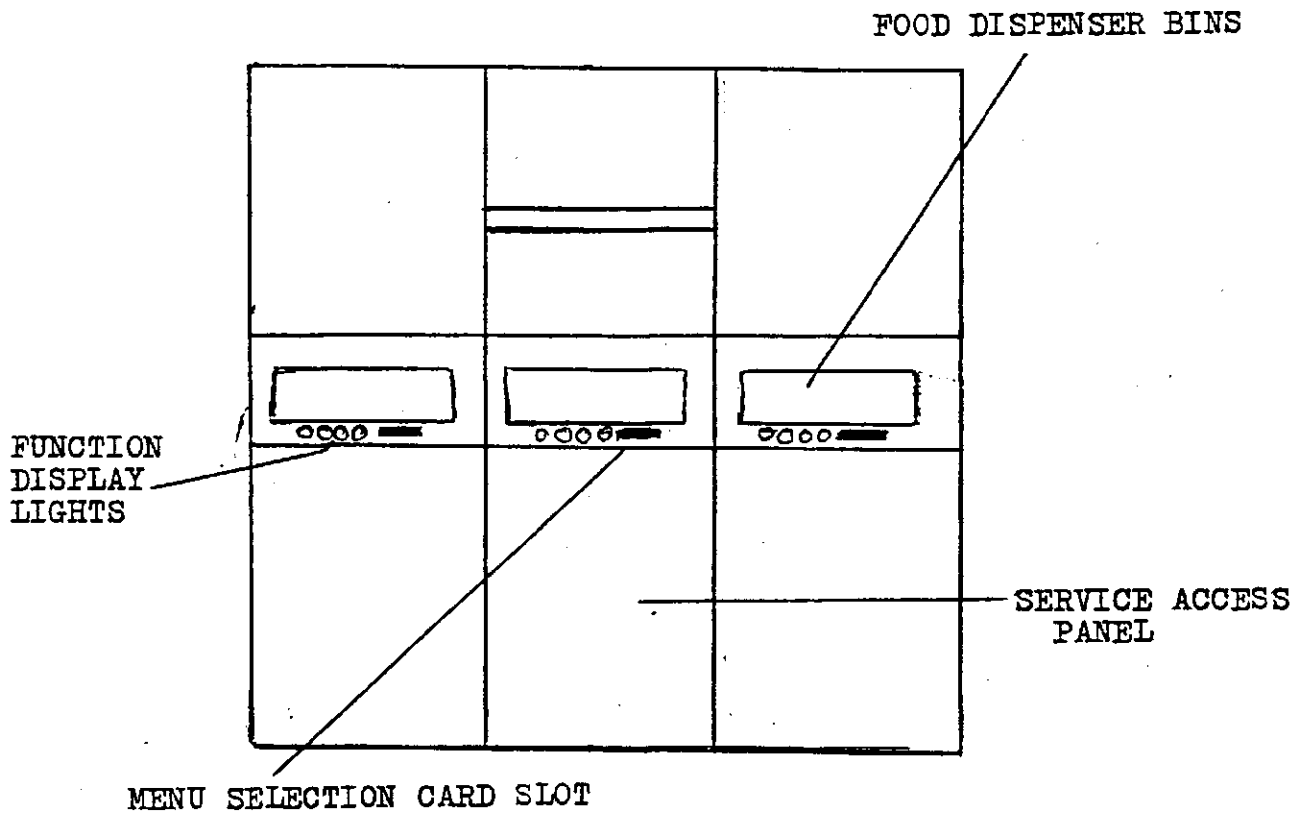
White Darkness (July)

Shadowmind (Aug)

The Next Doctor Who Script Book is due out in April. It will be Power of the Daleks.

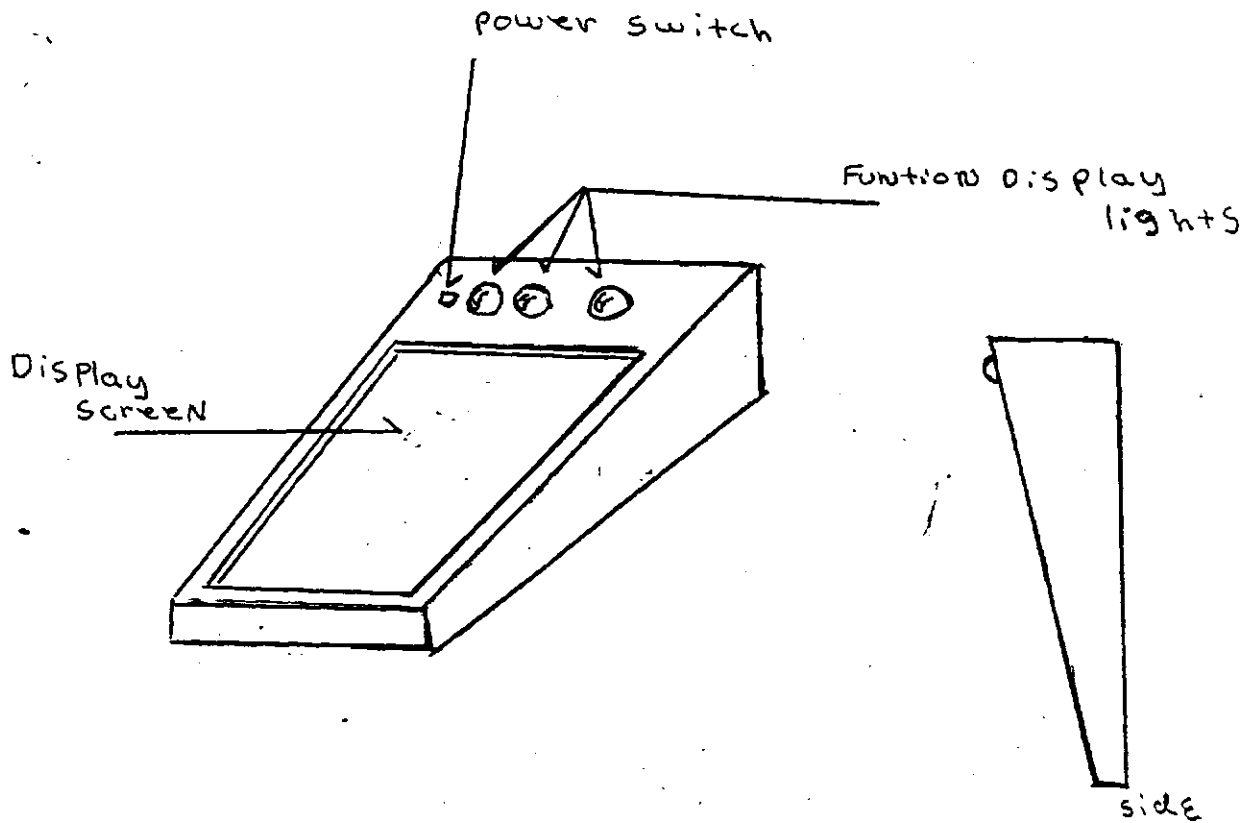
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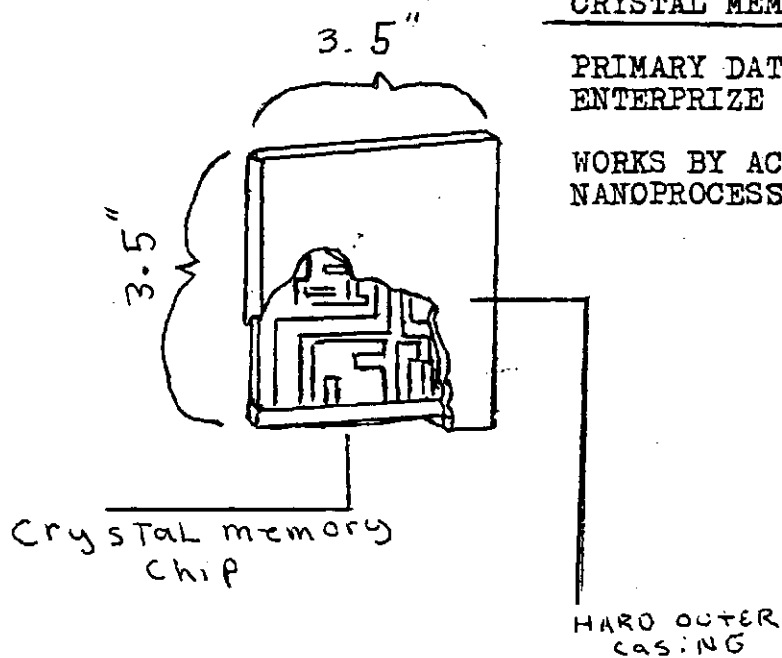
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# Suggestions For the Spacefaring Insomniac

By Ted Foster

Relics by Michael Jan Friedman  
Rating: 000 (Commander)

Teleplay by Ron Moore

Oh, I've been waiting for this one. I admire Gene Roddenberry for keeping the two Star Treks separate in order to make the Next Generation stand on its own merits, but it is nice to see the original cast making an episode or two with Picard and company. And the episode "Relics" featuring James Doohan was one of the better written and enjoyable shows of the sixth season. So it was with some anticipation that I was waiting for the release of the novelization.

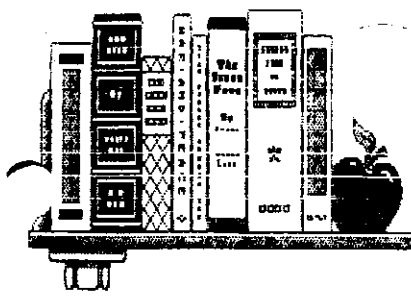
As James Blish could've told you, most episodes cross-written word for word from a screen play into a story don't make a good book because they're fat too short. An hour's airtime translates into a novella at best, but this does have a good result. Authors hired to do novelizations of movies or TV shows are generally given quite a bit of latitude to add to the story, explore characterizations, and even add to the official Star Trek history from time to time. And that is exactly what author Michael Jan Friedman is attempting to do here with generally good results.

For those of you who were temporarily off planet when this episode aired, the story revolves around the Enterprise "D" finding a Dyson Sphere (No pun intended.); a spherical shell orbiting a star the radius of which is close to Earth's orbit! They also find a crashed Federation freighter, the Janolen, lost 73 years ago, and to the surprise of Geordi, Riker, and Worf how board it there is still a survivor left locked into the transporter. The lone stranger turns out to be Captain Montgomery Scott, and though he can still fix almost anything he is at a loss with how to deal with feeling useless and 75 years out of date.

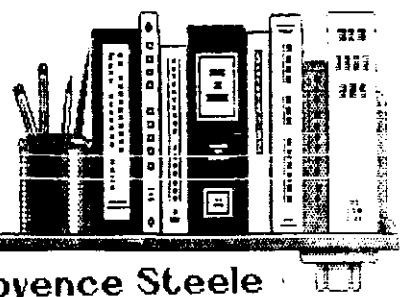
In order to flesh out the story, Mr. Friedman spends some time telling the story of Scotty on board the Janolen prior to her crash, and this is a welcome addition. Also, in a similar vein to Next Generation episodes all too often adding a "B" storyline in order to add action, he also adds another storyline not shown in the episode (a "C" storyline?). This involves a young ensign named Kane determined to advance no matter who he steps on. His biggest stumbling block is Commander Riker who sees through his facade and who is determined to bring his ambition down to a reasonable level. This story is not really needed, and many times appears to be the fill-material it is, but it has its moments. Other additions just don't work. Scotty recreating the original Enterprise crew as well as the "Old girl's bridge" comes to mind, and this actually detracts from the book rather than adding anything new. But the complaints are few.

We don't really learn anything new that wasn't presented in the story as to the disposition of the remainder of the original cast, but that's to be expected. On the whole I'd recommend this book, and with an entire Dyson Sphere to explore (with the land mass of 250 million class M planets that could take some time!) I hope that the author returns here time and time again. I wonder what the Federation would do if it could calm that star down, eh?





# Suggestions For the Spacefaring Insomniac



By Sandra Provence Steele

Best Destiny by Diane Carey  
\*\*\* (3 of 5 stars)

Well, Uhmmm...Okay, I couldn't help liking this book because despite all the flaws in characterization, Diane Carey has a writing style that is extremely readable and, at times, captivating. This novel is set at the end of Star Trek VI and it makes the attempt to lead us into new territory.

First Warning: if you have listened to the audio tape version of this story be prepared for some major changes. The characterization of the hostile and difficult young James T. Kirk aka. "Jimmy" was softened from the characterization in the book. The book follows the format of real-time chapters interspersed with "Retrospective" chapters. Frankly, I think the story flows better in the book even with the bad characterization of Kirk.

Second Warning: The character of Jimmy Kirk comes from recent work that the Carey's have done with troubled youth in the "Vision Quest" project. The idea of a young Kirk as a juvenile delinquent who was out of control and excessively hostile towards his parents does not sit well in view of Kirk's overall personality profile in this writers opinion anyway. I can easily see Kirk as being rebellious and headstrong but not as a junior hood. Since I am aware of the mission of "Vision Quest" this characterization may have been overly obvious to me and it may not seem as out of line to other readers.

Third Warning: Be prepared, Starfleet has become even more military than ever before seen. I think this is offensive and I don't appreciate the current trend of making everything in the "future" exactly match what exists in our time. Trust me, the crew never jumped up when the captain entered the bridge nor did everyone act like they were in the navy. This trend started being really obvious in Star Trek V and I still don't like it.

Now for the good stuff. This tale, despite it's flaws, is entertaining anyway. The Enterprise-A is taking the long way home to Starbase One to be decommissioned as an obsolete vessel (never mind that it is practically new...apparently their government likes wasting funds, too) They pick up readings of an anti-matter "flushback" indicating that a ship has blown up. The direction from which this occurrence was detected matches an archeological dig site that just happened to be where Captain Kirk went on his "first adventure in space". (Question: How did he get to Tarsus Four if he hasn't been in space before? Don't you just hate the people who write to cover blurbs?) Events remind Kirk of that period in his youth and so we start with the flashbacks. The characters of Captain Robert April, George Kirk, and most of the other ancillary characters are great and make this book worth reading. The retrospective chapters are well paced and full of adventure. The real-time story is not quite as strong and frankly reminds me of five different animated episodes put together. However negative this review might seem I do think that this story is worth reading and maybe even buying.