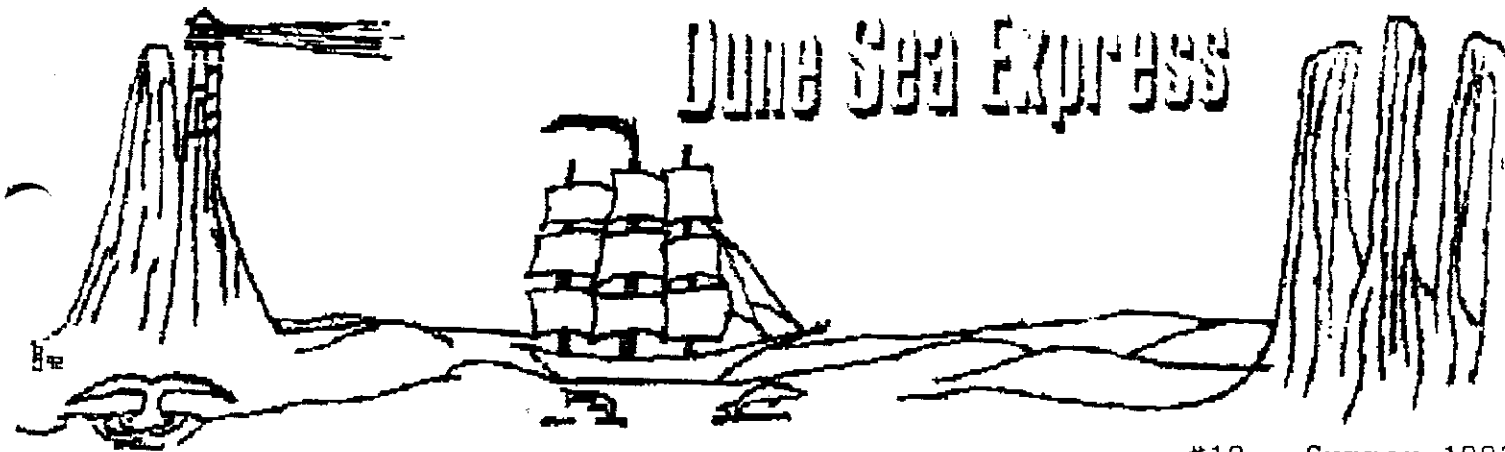
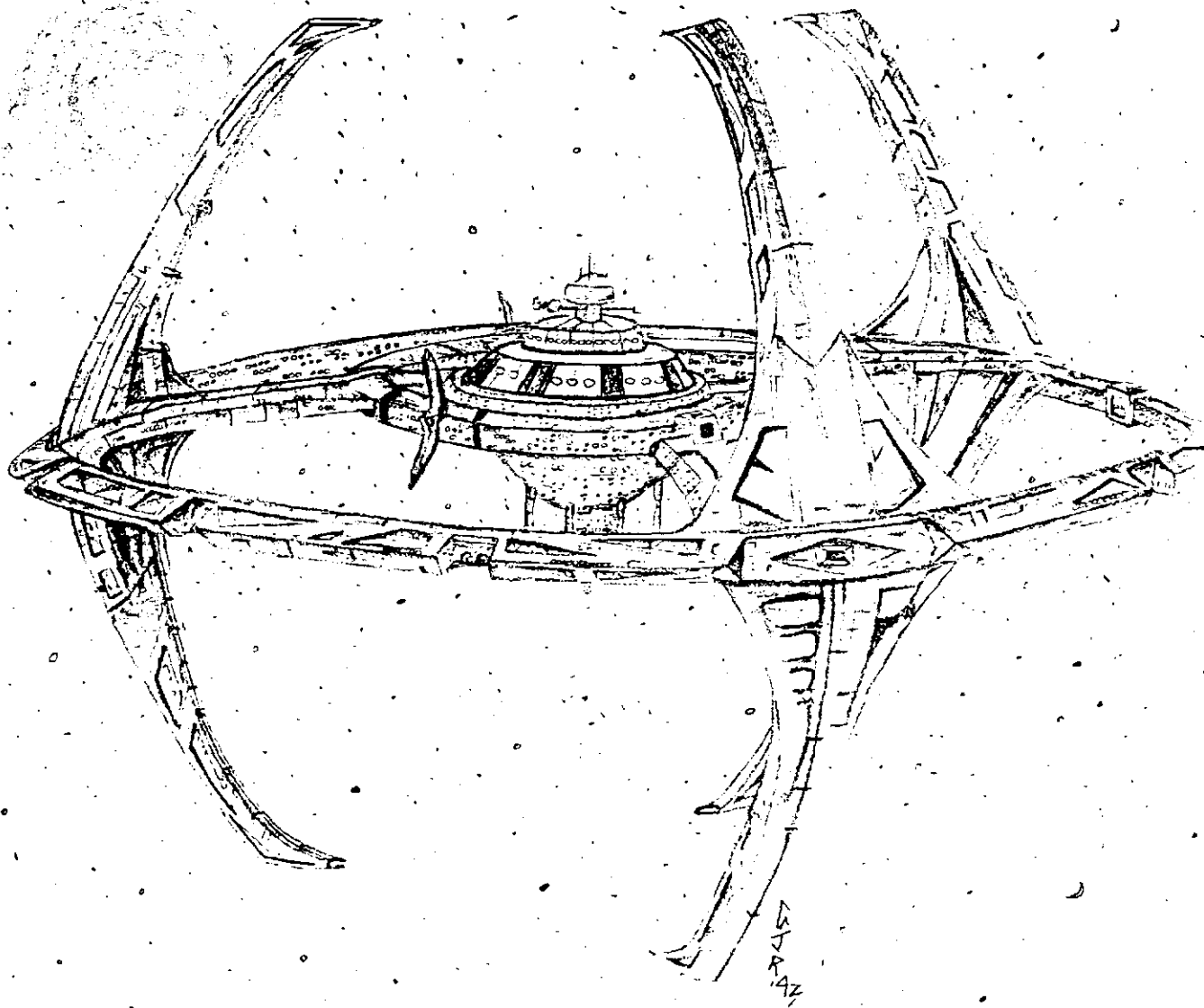


# DUNE SEA EXPRESS



#19 Summer 1993



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DSE Family News

In March we were informed of the passing of DeeDee Emo which  
 occured suddenly in February. DeeDee was a Nurse and a Nursing  
 Professor here at Angelo State. She was a Star Trek and Doctor  
 Who fan of sweet proportions. She touched many lives, ours  
 included. She will be missed. DeeDee is survived by a brother, an  
 aunt and her 3 cats. She was a long-time sufferer of Lupus and  
 memorials would be welcomed to any related charity.

On a happier note we have also been informed that former Co-  
 editor of the Dune Sea Express Joni White (J.K. to those who were  
 with us back that far.) and her husband Richard have been visited  
 by the stork. Who left behind an 8 pound baby girl named Kathryn  
 Nicole White (Sorry, if the spelling is wrong, I haven't recieved  
 official written notification and the local people who would know  
 aren't answering the phone right now.) Congratulations!!! (I'll  
 send the gift when I've finished it. It'll be too big right now  
 anyway. P.G.)

# Sci Fi Poem

By Donna Coa

The television, the television through the years we have watched.  
The producers and actors who have taken us to the *Outer Limits*,  
only to become *Lost in Space*.  
Where we are found by *Buck Rogers* who is aboard the *Battlestar Galactica*.  
In transporting us back to earth via *The Time Tunnel*, we come  
across *Superman*, *Flash Gordon*, and *The Incredible Hulk*  
playing *War of the Worlds*.  
Our minds are lost in *The Twilight Zone* to *The Invaders* from the  
*Night Gallery* who are *One Step Beyond*.  
Once again united with ourselves by *Doctor Who* in the *Land of*  
*the Giants* we are taken on a *Star Trek* to a *Voyage to the*  
*Bottom of the Sea*.  
Back upon our own *Alien Nation* we find that there are *Dark*  
*Shadows* who only *Rocky Jones* can defeat.  
And when all is said and done we can blast off in the *Red Dwarf*  
on *Logan's Run* to the moon in *Space: 1999*.  
We sadly return to reality with *Starman* and *Voyagers*.  
The producers, the actors, may they Live Long and Prosper.

---

What do you call Mr Homm when he bangs the Betazoid Dinner Gong?  
A Homm Dinger

How many ears does Mr. Spock have?  
3 - Right, Left, and the Final Frontier

What does Leonard Nimoy use to start his car?  
Spock Plugs

What fast food restaurant does Picard try to avoid?  
Borger King

What do you call a Klingon with a disruptor?  
In Charge

What do you call a deaf Ferengi?  
Impossible

How do you get rid of a Klingon?  
Use Kling-Free in the dryer

# The Major From Bajor

By Ted Foster

## I

On the fringe of known space in a once secluded place  
in a station of the Federation helping out a wounded nation.  
And on this new frontier is a Lady without peer  
Who while being stunning sends the evil doers running  
when the Major draws her phaser down on Bajor.

## II

It was with some unease that the crew met Kira Nerys -  
Impressive and imposing, even while reposing.  
She's a fighter, a real do-righter, trying to make Bajor's  
burdens lighter.  
Try to hurt her blasted land, and you'll know right where you  
stand.  
When the Major draws her phaser down on Bajor.

## III

But beneath that hard exterior is another type of creature.  
A many sided woman whose mind is always roamin'  
With eyes so fine, figure divine, and a smile very sublime.  
Men grow weak and starry-eyed when she tours the Promenade  
When the Major leaves her phaser down on Bajor.

## IV

She's number one with Sisko and the closest friend to Odo  
With Dax and O'Brien, she's fun but mystifyin'  
But her patience is short when it comes to the hands of Quark  
And the good Doctor, Bashir, had best watch his ego or fear  
When the Major brings her phaser back from Bajor.

## V

Now running the command center, no one alive can prevent her  
From her duty, her mission, and her quick-thinking decisions  
And her future is expanding (Cardassians notwithstanding)  
Being Prime Minister might she try? Or the future Kai?  
When the Major puts up her phaser down on Bejor.

(With apologies to Admiral I.J. Galantin, USN Ret., and his poem  
"Naiobe from Kobe". Anyone with additional verses is welcome to  
add them.)

# The Evolution Dilemma Part 5

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 Betasoid 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 and tour the ship. Riker tried out the fighter simulator on the Pegasus and was surprised to discover his opponent in the next simulator was a Horta.*

## VII

After making final checks in Engineering, Picard moved toward the turbolift on his way to the bridge. The time for their first attempt was fast approaching, and activity on the Enterprise had calmed from its fever pitch. Everything seemed to be ready, and aside for the crewmen ripping out bulkhead plating down in the holds the remainder to the crew was at their alert stations. It had been harder than he thought to watch them doing the work. As each plate was removed and the ship's internal skeleton was revealed, he could feel his throat tightening. After four years it was like violating an old friend.

The feeling wasn't new to him. Picard had felt it when the USS Yamato had blown herself apart, and again when he had been in the unique position of seeing a future version of his own ship destroyed. By far the worst was in the tractor beam of the Borg, watching them slice out portions of the ship and being powerless to stop it. Somehow, his ship had survived. No, somehow wasn't the right word. Through the tenacity and capabilities of her crew, the Enterprise had survived, and it would survive being dismantled as well.

Reaching the lift, Beverly Crusher's call of "Captain," caused him to quit his train of thought and wait for her. She approached, and said, "Thought you might like some good news. Our last communication showed that approximately 85% of the population is moving toward evacuation centers, and with a little luck we should be able to reach the others before time runs out."

Picard smiled, "I appreciate the news. Coordinator Effingham has been helpful, but has absolutely refused to budge on his position with the Tamatin. Having him requesting updates every hour has become tiresome, to say the least."

They entered the lift, and Picard said, "Bridge." Regarding the Doctor again, he asked, "What did you think of our host, Captain Marschall?"

The Doctor thought about the question for a minute, then answered, "I'm not one to question a being's beliefs on a first impression, Jean Luc, but he made me nervous. The uniform was one thing - the fact that he constantly wore a weapon did bother me. What kind of a frontier planet is Tynan, anyway?"

Picard rubbed his chin in thought, "Perhaps if you knew a bit more about Tynan IV things would make a bit more sense. It isn't a frontier world at all, but rather one that took many years to be rediscovered by Earth. One of the first colonies launched in the latter 21st century, it found itself completely cut off from Earth by the fallout from the Eugenics Wars and the subsequent fall into despotism. Unlike most colonies, the world is as rich in minerals and diversified life as Earth is, and it became a prime target of human pirates and later alien raiders."

They arrived on the bridge, but as they stepped off the Captain added, "The attacks became of frequent that the colony began to fear for not only its population but also for the future ecological balance of their world. In response to this, the grandson of the expeditions leader, Alexander Tynan, combined several of the branches of government into one group - the Tynanese Rangers. All Tynanese children begin their early schooling with the goal of becoming members of the Rangers, but by the age of 12 only 10% are still eligible. There is no pressure on the children up until then, but those that make it that far are asked to begin to make choices concerning the Ranger Corp."

Intrigued, Crusher listened intently. Picard continued, "Service is completely voluntary. A ranger is much more than a soldier. Each will have a degree in botany or zoology and is an expert at wilderness survival. Sometimes in pairs but usually alone, they would patrol large sectors of the Tynan wilderness, and became very effective in curbing poaching and defending the frontier against incursion. To the areas they protect they are policeman, defender, ecologist, and medic. They are meant to think and act independently of outside help."

"When a Ranger graduates from his training at age 20, a dual ceremony is held. The first is a sorrowful occasion - something like a day of mourning. In this ceremony he receives his weapon, and the sorrow shown is a reminder that though violence is wasteful and tragic, it is sometimes necessary to protect the people and the world they love. The weapon becomes a part of his uniform. I know Captain Marschall could tell you exactly how many times it has been fired in anger. It might also interest you to know that aside from the Rangers, police, and the Tynan military, no weapons are allowed on Tynan."

"The second ceremony is one of joy when the cadet receives the remainder of his uniform. Parts of this are meant to symbolize that being a ranger is not the cadet's job but a way of life. When Tynan IV was approached for entry into the Federation as a full member, one of the conditions of their entry was that those who chose Starfleet service from among the Ranger Corps be allowed to retain the symbols of their identity."

"And how do you know so much about them, Captain?" Beverly asked.

"It's simple really, My survival course instructor at the academy was a ranger, and I have never met a man more adept at taking care of himself. He had an uncanny ability to become one with his surroundings. Scouting a forest in one training exercise I walked right past the man and never sensed him until his hand was on my throat. Jack knew him, too, and had a similar experience. Maybe you heard the name - Tamas Erdeyli?"

Recognition dawned on Beverly's face. "Yes. I remember that name. He must have flustered Jack terribly because all I could get from him was, 'I don't want to talk about it.' Now I begin to see why."

Worf had been listening as the two approached, and smiled ferally, "Captain Marschall would be an impressive opponent indeed." Hearing that Picard knew that if possible his fellow captain would be invited by Worf for one of his security officer's exercise routines.

The security chief reported from behind him, "Pegasus is in position for the attempt, and Captain Marschall is signaling that they are ready."

Sitting at the bridge Engineering station, Geordi LaForge also reported, "All thruster packs show ready, Sir. We can begin whenever you like."

"All right...acknowledge the Pegasus and set computers to begin the warp field build up in thirty seconds," Picard said. With the crew already on Yellow alert there was no need to an increased alert status, but he had always been a commander who felt a need to let his crew know exactly what was going on. Switching on the intraship com system at his chair, he announced, "This is the Captain. All decks and stations, prepare for our initial push attempt in 25 seconds."

Data began to relay events as they happened in the preprogramed sequence. "Pegasus' support craft have moved to positions beyond the individual warp fields. Warp power build up now at 68%...now at 76%...Pegasus warp field is building at required levels...Thruster packs have activated."

On the screen forty eight points of dull red light could be seen as the thrusters began to nudge the Reaper. Data continued, "Warp power now at maximum. Warp field extending...now." The Enterprise shuddered gently like a ship cresting a wave, and then stabilized. "Captain, warp fields have extended. Frequency variations appear to be functioning without harmonic interference. Tractor beams have engaged. The asteroid is changing course at .05 degrees per second and increasing."



Captain Picard realized he had become so involved that only now he remembered to exhale. With a look of quiet relief shared with Troi, he leaned back into his command chair. "Mr. Worf, open a channel to the Pegasus." The bridge of the other ship appeared on the viewscreen.

"Pegasus, this is Enterprise. All is functioning as planned. My congratulations to you and Commander R'x'plk'dln," he said with a smile.

"And to you Captain. We show a push for another 68 seconds ought to do the..." He was interrupted by his tactical officer behind him reporting something. At the same time, the red alert klaxon aboard the Enterprise began to sound.

"Sensors show a vessel had appeared 1800 kilometers away at a vector of 20 mark 89," Worf bellowed. His look showed annoyance that any vessel could get this close without his detecting it.

"Visual!" Picard ordered. The screen instantly switched to a view showing the Pegasus pointing nose down toward the Reaper. Something else was there also - a shape roughly the same distance away but above the Pegasus toward the asteroid's axis. It was smaller than the other two ships, and appeared to be quite shiny. As he watched, a dozen points of light arced away from the Pegasus. Credit to Captain Marschall to have his fighter crews standing by.

Data interjected, "The other vessel appears to match the object encountered earlier. Sir, it does not appear to be moving."

"We may have a problem," LaForge reported. "That ship is emitting a high energy warp field, and its growing in size!"

As if on cue the ship shuddered and then shook violently as if hit by a cosmic hammer. The lights dimmed, then the emergency lights came on bathing everyone in a dull-white glow. The shaking continued, and one panel adjacent to Data burst open in flames.

"Shut down!" ordered Picard over the shrieking sound of the Enterprise's pounding. "Raise shields! Mr. Worf, hail the unknown vessel."

With that, the assault stopped, and the ship sat for a moment in total silence. The sounds that Picard kept a check on in his subconscious were gone, and that alone frightened him more than any of the buffeting had. Remaining outwardly confident, he ordered in a controlled voice, "Damage report."

Geordi and Deanna moved quickly to extinguish the fire. Retrieving a cylinder from a compartment by the turbolift, the engineer doused the flames with a single burst and added a second for good measure. Handing the cylinder to Troi, LaForge moved back to his station. Crusher in the meantime moved among the bridge personnel searching for anyone hurt.

Data answered, "Sir, the mains are down. Shields have raised but cannot be sustained. The main power grid has been badly damaged."

Worf had relaxed his hand's vise-like grip on the edge of the tactical console. He looked over his instruments, and scowled, "Weapons systems inoperative. We have also lost our phaser lock. Pegasus' fighters are moving into a position around the other vessel. No order, however, has been given to attack.

The other vessel is not moving at all."

As the bridge watched another wave of fighters launched from the dorsal of the Pegasus. Worf added, "We are getting no response to our hail to the enemy vessel, Sir. Pegasus, however, is hailing. Secure channel, audio only."

"Put them through, Lieutenant," Picard ordered.

On the bridge speakers, a message filled with static began, "Good to see you still together, Enterprise." It was Marschall's voice. "I've given a launch order only because we have nothing else right at the moment. Our warp capacity is out with two injectors completely fused. Ship weapons out, shields at 67%. We should be able to restore visuals..." His voice trailed off, and then Enterprise's main viewer came to life showing the Pegasus' bridge. Smoke obscured everything over 2 meters above the deck, and several large areas had been blackened by small fires that has been extinguished by the crew.

Picard frowned in frustration. Whatever had happened, he couldn't be sure it was a deliberate attack by the other vessel. They had lost their weapons, and yet the other vessel had not finished them off nor would it talk with them to explain their actions. First things first - it was time to pick up the pieces.

"Any idea what happened?" Captain Picard asked. The question was directed at Riker and R'plk'dln behind Marschall. A red, tender welt was beginning to rise on the First Officer's forehead.

The Hamalki stood in a stance that Picard had only seen a few times before - very angry. When it spoke its piping voice managed to convey every bit of that feeling. "The two overlapping warp fields were breached by a third field set to not cancel but quickly multiply their effects exponentially. This in turn resulted in massive feedbacks and power surges. R'ker shut us down before we lost our power core."

Riker, too, looked very irritated. "They knew just when to hit us, sir. It may not have been a weapon as we would think of one, but it was as good as any. Pegasus won't be ready for another attempt until its too late."

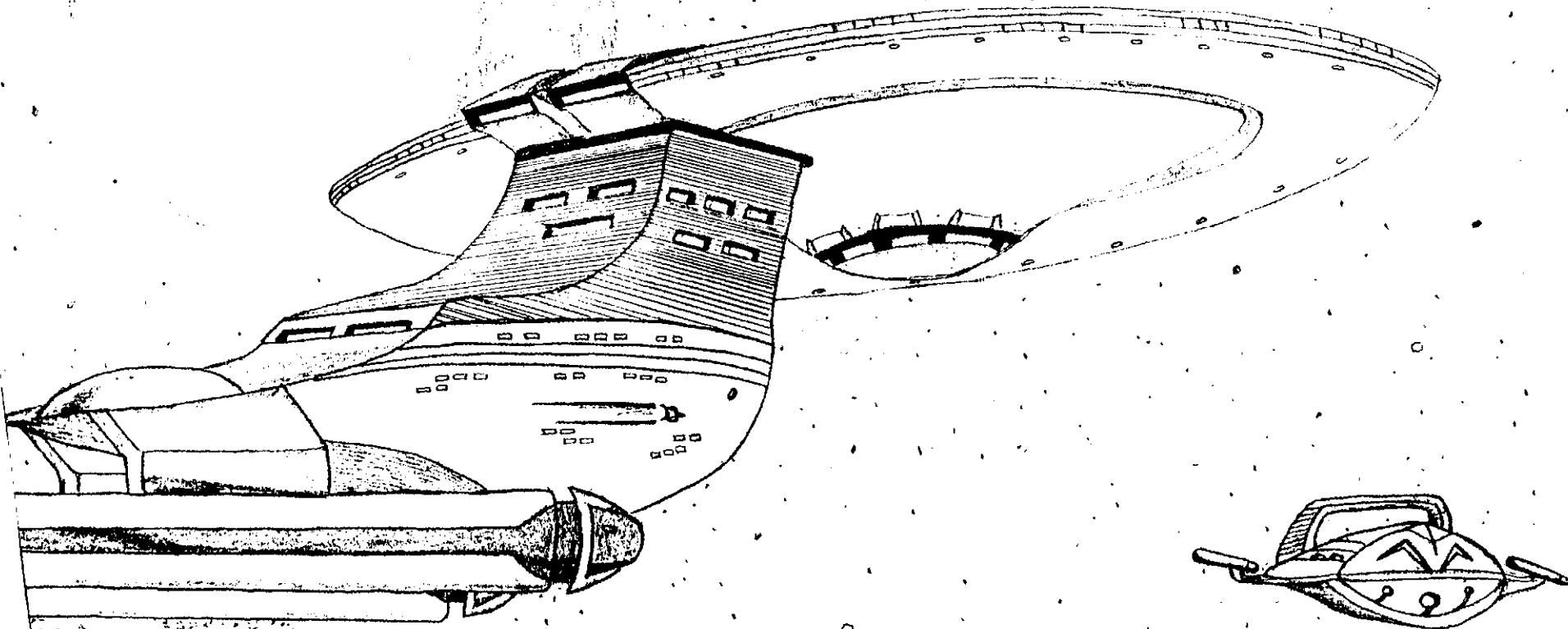
With an expression contrastingly devoid on emotion, Data added on the Enterprise's bridge, "We are in no better shape, sir. Complete repairs to the nacelles will require a starbase's facilities."

Picard considered the dilemma before him. Technically he had no proof that the other ship's actions had been a hostile act, though their appearance certainly hinted at that. Until he knew what they had to gain by disrupting their rescue efforts he wouldn't know for sure. More importantly for the moment, he had two ships that were severely damaged against a strong foe. He made a decision that he hoped would bring the three ships back to a more even standing.

"Captain Marschall, commence your attack on..." he began, but was interrupted by Worf.

"Sir, the alien vessel is...changing!" the Klingon barked.

"On screen," Picard said and the view of the Pegasus' bridge was replaced with a magnified image of the alien ship. As he watched, a large portion of the stern hull simply disappeared to



BR-92

be replaced with a much reduced tapered cone. At the same time a new bulbous extension of what he took to be the bow appeared with four long, arcing pylons reaching out from its surface like an insect's antenna. The pylons began to glow a faint blue, and without further machinations the ship vanished like it had never existed.

### VIII

Data approached the Captain's ready room door and signalled to entry. While he waited the second or two it would take for the Captain to respond, he went over his observations of the alien ship again in his mind. It's shape-shifting ability fascinated him. At the briefing following the disastrous warp field attempt on the Reaper, sensor data from the Pegasus' fighters confirmed his earlier observations from before the power to the ship's sensors was cut off. The alien vessel appeared to be made of very little solid matter, but rather was constructed of overlapping energy fields similar to the Enterprise's own shields.

The technology that could do that, however, was light years ahead of anything the Federation could produce. The advantages were enormous; instantaneous repair to damaged systems or hull areas and a ship that could tailor itself to almost any need or situation. The most intriguing event though had been the ship's disappearance. Scans from the fighters showed a massive release of neutrinos and tachyons during and for a short time after the vent indicating the ship had created a small rip in the space/time continuum and per say, but as Commander Riker liked to put it, a hiccup. If they could achieve contact with these beings, the rewards could be incredible.

At the briefing afterward, there had been some heated debate as to how to approach the aliens. Surprisingly, it was Commander Riker who pushed for a military strike should the aliens appear again. He argued convincingly that their superior technology and obvious intention of harm to Deralium meant that the Federation ships had to take the initiative when and if the mystery ship appeared again. Picard, however, had decided that only peaceful contact attempts would be continued - mostly because it was not clear if their weapons would have any effect on the other ship.

Riker's plan for placing the explosives on the asteroid had been continuing in earnest, and it looked like they would have the charges all in place within the required time window. Pegasus had remained on station to aid as she could and commence repairs. Some of the varied small craft had been invaluable in repairing areas of the Enterprise's external power conduits that would normally have had to wait for better facilities.

The Captain's voice replied, "Come," and Data entered to find Counselor Troi already talking with the Captain. He looked up and said, "Yes, Data?"

The android moved forward with his clipped step, "The Solstice has arrived in orbit, Sir, and has started to beam aboard evacuees. Captain Isadore wishes to speak with you when you are available. Repairs are continuing with all weapons systems restored. Shields are now available at 63%, and we have

limited transporter capability restored. Our only disruption was the fight which broke out in Ten Forward."

Picard frowned, "Yes, Counselor Troi was just informing me of her concerns. It seems we have a growing case of paranoia on board."

The Counselor looked thoughtful, "It may approach that Captain, but right now it's manifesting itself in a high state of tension and frustration. Our people are working hard and coming up with solutions to save this planet, only to have them smashed by a hit and run enemy we can't do anything about. You have dealt with that well, but the ensigns in Ten Forward needed to vent their emotion in another way."

The Captain considered her opinion, but Data seemed intrigued. "I have often noticed a need by humans to vent their frustrations which often results in them bringing harm to those who would normally be trying to help. Is it not possible to keep such energetic activity pointed toward the antagonist?"

"It's possible, Data - even encouraged - but is much more difficult for us to put into practice," Picard said. "Any suggestions, Counselor?"

Yes. Keep making your regular reports to all decks, and keep everyone busy - at least until the crisis is over."

Picard massaged his eyebrows with his hand. It would be harder on his crew maintaining an alert status, but they would be busy indeed. "Very well. Mr. Data, we will remain on yellow alert until further notice. See if you can get more people to aid the staff preparing the ship for the evacuees. In 2 hours we'll go on red alert for the second attempt."

"Aye, sir," Data said and turned to leave. At the back of his mind he wished that there was something he could do to share his composure and logic with the rest of the crew, but realized he could not. And at least for now, he could not even be frustrated about that. Being an android did have its advantages.

## IX

Riker moved across the bridge to ops to check on the progress of their shuttles. Nearly all of the shuttles, pods, and atmospheric craft from both starships had moved off and were now collecting people on the planet and taking them to the Solstice. Normally a luxury liner, her Captain had done an admirable job of converting her various entertainment centers and spas into additional living areas for the refugees. Will had no doubts that a few Blue Star Shipping rules had been broken with the "renovation" of those areas and admitted Captain Isadore for it. The ops screen showed a steady stream of shuttles coming in from the outlying areas while the liner concentrated her transporters on the evacuation centers in the city.

A few moments ago Pegasus had moved off on impulse to join the Solstice. There was little more for her to do here now that the last of the charges were in place and the countdown for the new plan was nearing completion. Rx'plk'dln had gone over the figures for the progressive explosions with Data several times right before departure just to make sure all was in order. They

wouldn't get a second chance at this. As another precaution, a full squadron of Thunderbirds was now hovering several hundred kilometers behind the Enterprise. Riker was amused to see that Lieutenant Enlahr was in command of the fighters.

Ensign Ro was at the back science station. A computer diagram of the Reaper shown on the monitor in front of her. It was covered with dots clustered on the strongest areas of the asteroid. Most of the dots were green, a few yellow, but as the seconds ticked one by one they, too, changed to green. When the last was ready, she turned to Riker and said, "Commander, the last charge is in place, and all remote detonators are linked to the computer and ready."

Riker wasted no time. "Captain Picard to the bridge please." Even as he was finishing it the doors to the ready room opened and Picard walked out. After verifying that all was set, he initiated the final two minute countdown.

Data began to count off the time to beginning the detonations. As they dropped down to the forty-five second level Picard ordered, "Raise shields. Load all weapons bays."

Worf complied so quickly that Riker was sure he must have preset most of the controls. The seconds continued, and Riker's attention turned back to the enemy vessel he felt sure would appear any second.

## X

"The first detonation has been triggered, Captain," Data reported somewhat redundantly. The brilliant white flash in the upper left of the asteroid showed clearly through the ship's viewer. It was followed several seconds later by a second flash in the center right of the picture. Picard began to relax. Perhaps this was going to work after all.

His optimistic view turned sharply downward when a simultaneous report came from both ops, Worf, and Lt. Enlahr. "The enemy vessel had reappeared, sir. Six thousand kilometers on bearing 215 Mark 3."

A third detonation lit the viewer, but Picard shifted all his attention to the alien. It wasn't close in like last time, but seemed to be viewing at a distance. Still, it was within weapons range. "Ensign lay in a course for the alien. Full impulse. Data hail them on all frequencies and in all languages. Mr. Worf stand by on phasers." The Enterprise turned away from the Reaper and lunged toward the energy ship.

Blast number four backlit the ship as she approached the smaller ship. "Any response to hour hail, Mr.. Data?" Picard asked.

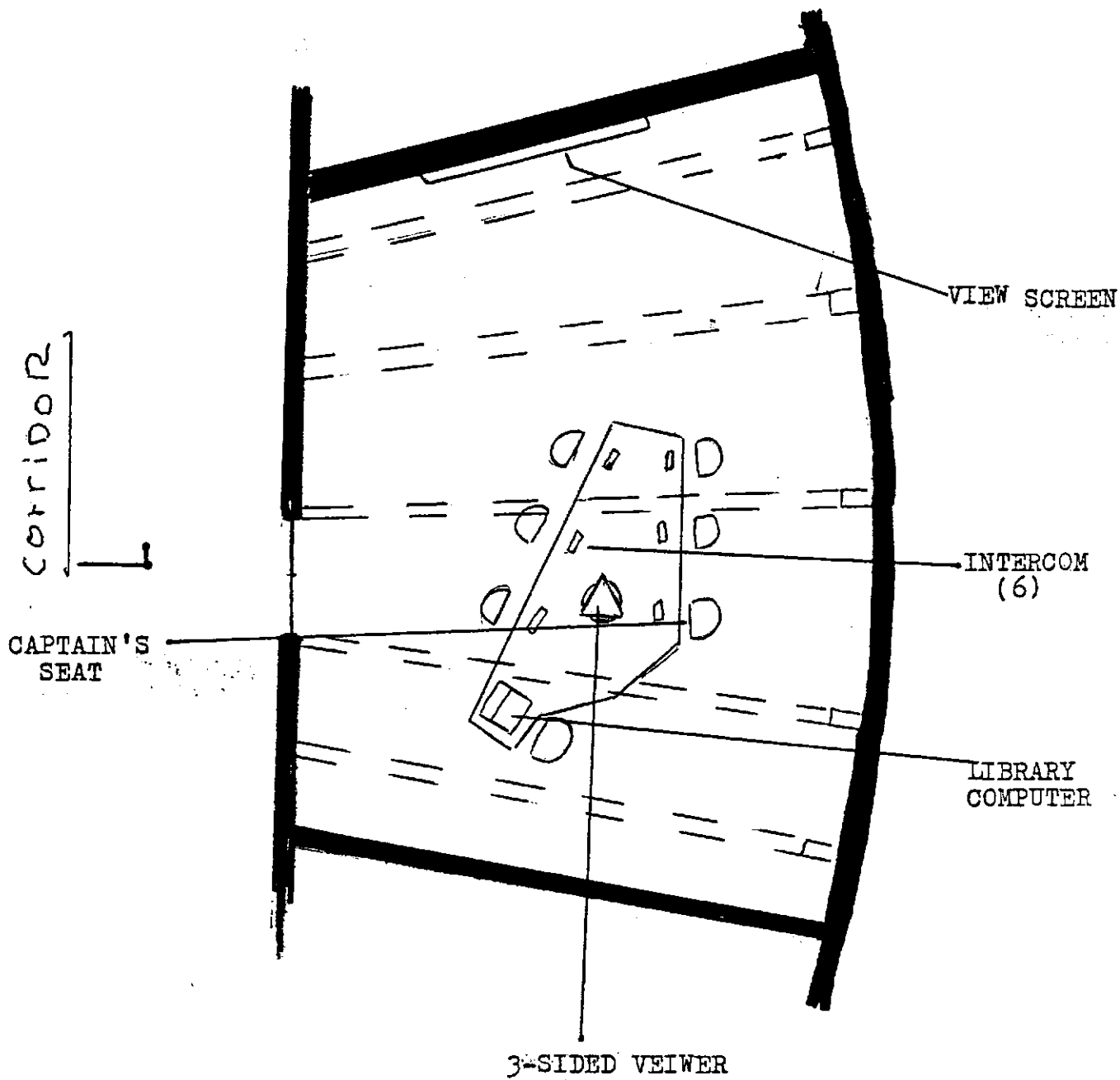
"Negative, sir. However, I am reading energy fluctuations in the subspace field. It appears to be an energy build up."

"All right then. Mr. Worf charge phasers and lock on target. Try to pinpoint that matter does register. Stand by to fire a shot across her bow."

To be continued....

MCC-1401

# MAIN BRIEFING ROOM





# Interstellar Molecules

REMINDER TO WRITERS AND ARTISTS: Deadlines for persons who must mail via U.S. post office or UPS, submissions must be postmarked and or shipped by July 23rd for the Fall issue and October 22nd for the Winter issue. For persons delivering in the flesh the dates remain as usual August 1st and November 1st respectively. Remember, if I don't have them on time I can't guarantee they'll make the issue. We're running a tight printing schedule here!!

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30th Anniversary of Doctor Who News:

Doctor Who magazine dated March 17th confirms that BBC Radio Light Entertainment and the BBC Audio Collection of BBC Enterprises are going ahead with 5 new 30 minutes radio episodes of Doctor Who. Jon Pertwee has been signed to play the Doctor and Barry Letts (producer during the Pertwee era) will be doing the writing. Recording is due to take place in May and the BBC Audio Collection has tentative plans to release the tapes later in the year. Good news for those of us not able to receive BBC radio. A second series is a definite possibility if the first is successful.

Contrary to current rumor, the BBC has NOT gone ahead with the proposed 30th anniversary special and BBC Video producer David Jackson was doubtful about the project but the idea has not been completely dismissed. The 30th anniversary is November of this year. Time is running out.

On a related subject, for those familiar with *The Stranger* videos, episode number three is due out in May and is called "In Memory Alone". It will star Colin Baker and Nicola Bryant as usual and is written by Nicholas Briggs. After finally seeing the first two episodes ("Summoned By Shadows" and "More Than A Messiah") I can now say that I agree with the reviews. This series of mail order video dramas are the next best thing to new Doctor Who and that's saying a lot because I never liked Colin Baker's Doctor very much.

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NEWS ON THE CITY ON THE EDGE OF FOREVER ORIGINAL SCRIPT that was supposed to be released last September was delayed due to author Harlan Ellison's being too ill to complete it has been rescheduled for between spring and summer 1993. However, I noted that it had been listed as delayed on the cancellation list in the back of the Comic Shop Preview Catalog in May. For those of you not blessed with the Sci Fi Channel (I don't know how I ever lived without it. It's almost the only channel I watch now.) Harlan is doing a weekly editorial on *Sci Fi Buzz*. When he first started he did not look at all well but he was looking much better when I saw him last week. Hopefully this is a good sign.



# Suggestions for the Spacefaring Insomniac

By Ted Foster

Emissary by J.M. Dillard (Story by Rick Berman & Michael Piller)  
Deep Space Nine #1 - Pocket Books  
Rating OOOO (Captain)

Prior to their airing, new television series are always exciting. Even the worst of TV's offerings can be made to sound like the event of the year when the station's promotional ads come on. Masters of hype, they excel at raising ones hopes, and this can lead to a real let down if the program turns out to be the usual slop turned out by the networks. Pilots have a tough job to do in living up to the hype, but when they do the show will be one to keep your eye on.

Happily, *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine's* first program, the two-hour "Emissary," did just that. The script was carefully worked to introduce characters throughout the show giving the writers time to introduce us to each individual. The story was both a thought provoking, introspective tale while at the same time had plenty of battle and phaser fire for the action buffs. Subjects often avoided in previous Treks such as religion, prophesy, and even sex changes (thanks to Jadzia Dax) are all engaged. Best of all, while doing all this it is an excellent telling of a man, Benjamin Sisko, and his struggle with and eventual acceptance of the demons of his past.

Enter Pocket Books and their novelization of the pilot. After my first reading my advice is - don't miss this. Ms. Dillard does a wonderful job in gently expanding the backgrounds of each character far better than the two-hour opener could. Well known characters such as Keiko and Miles O'Brien are included too, and most importantly she makes sure that as the story ends the people themselves have not yet worked out their place on the station. This uncertainty is very realistic, and leaves the way open for many more stories in the future. Those of us who sometimes get bored with the "Everything's Great on the Starship" attitude will find it refreshing.

What of the show's (and the book's) future? Will they finally find aliens who don't have two arms, two legs, and funny heads? Will they do more deep star exploration of the Gamma Quadrant? Will they explore religious and well as philosophical topics? Will the crew rotate on and off the station as a real crew would? Time will tell, but since the producers have broken a few rules with this pilot, maybe a few more will fall down the line. My Pagh has high hopes.

# Suggestions For the Spacefaring Insomniac

By Ted Foster

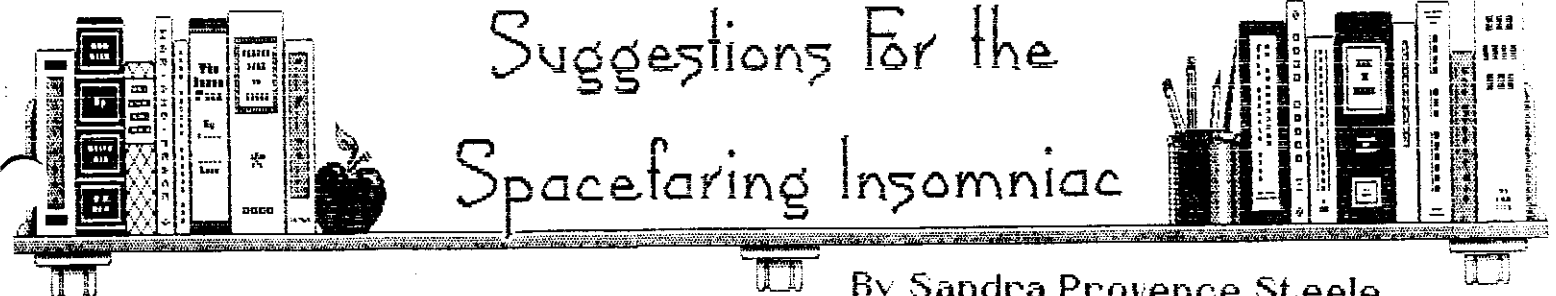
Nightshade by Laurell K. Hamilton  
Next Generation #24 - Pocket Books  
Rating: 000 (Commander)

What are heroes? An honest question, and one possible answer is people taken out of their usual element and put in a strange situation only to prevail in the end anyway. Some of the best Next Generation episodes have dealt with this kind of story line. Among them are "Disaster" where Troi is thrust into command and "The Mind's Eye" where Picard finds himself to be a loving, planet-bound husband. This book deals with a similar "Trading Places" type theme, and it was an enjoyable read.

Nightshade begins with the Enterprise arriving at the planet Oriana in order to help warring factions finally work out peace before the planet becomes totally uninhabitable. It will not be an easy task because the different sides have been fighting for over 200 years and cannot even remember what started the conflict in the first place. The hatreds are deep and learned from birth. Picard, Troi, and Worf beam down to do their best, and things seem to be progressing well. Then, unexpectedly, the Enterprise is called away by an alien distress signal.

From there the mission goes down hill pretty quickly. One faction's leader is gruesomely murdered and the blame falls on Picard. Taking a surprising turn as he is lead off to the Orianian version of death row, he appoints Worf as the new Federation ambassador! And it is here that the story gets interesting. Even with Troi to help him, our loveable Ruffle-head is in for a quick study in decidedly non-Klingon diplomacy. Still, he puts his menacing stance and towering height to good use when it suits him. Unlike the shows revolving around him as a single father, here he manages to be effective without losing his Klingon edge.

Other parts of this book shine as well. The aliens, while humanoid as almost always, do have a mysterious and non-human feel about them. The story moves along at a good pace, and the author even handles the characters with care and enthusiasm. This is definitely one of the better books in the series.



# Suggestions For the Spacefaring Insomniac

By Sandra Provence Steele

This interview with Carmen Carter took place on March 20, 1993 at B. Dalton Booksellers in Highland Mall, Austin, TX. The occasion was a book signing to promote her new Next Gen novel The Devil's Heart. She has also written a classic Trek novel, Dreams of the Raven and another Next Gen novel, Doomsday World.

SS: So tell me about your career.

CC: I was born in San Antonio and raised in Austin. While at the University of Texas at Austin I was a member of the Science Fiction Club (with Howard Waldrop and other people who became science fiction authors in their own right and even including past DSE artist Rick Pearson.) I then moved to New York to work as a computer graphics operator. I wrote Dreams of the Raven in 1986. It took 2 years and it was written as an exercise in writing. I was very pleased to find out that it was publishable. I am now living in rural Virginia.

SS: Do you have a regular job there?

CC: I am unemployed.

SS: That means you are a full-time author.

CC: (Laughs) Yes, I am a full-time author. I would like to do a non-Trek story but I haven't found a good topic yet.

SS: So what about your other novels?

CC: Well, I was skeptical about Next Generation at first but I liked "Encounter at Farpoint" and was hooked. Then, when I was asked to write a Next Generation novel I agreed. I think Doomsday World is the weakest book I've written. I had fun writing it with Peter David, Michael Jan Friedman and the guys, but it is hard to get a lot of depth when you are working in a group like that. It was a good action adventure story though.

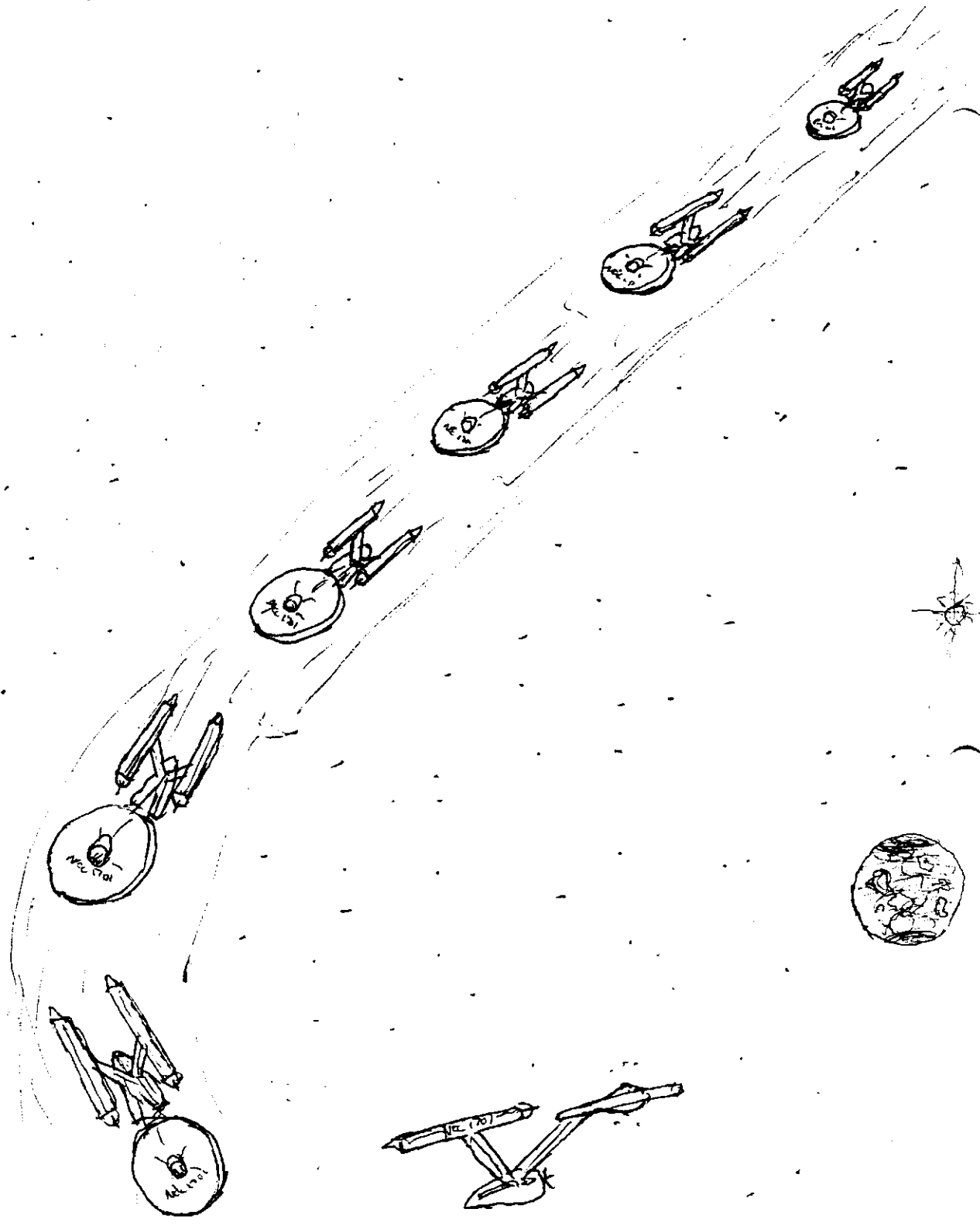
SS: Tell me about this new book.

CC: It was a real challenge. When I was offered the chance to write a hardcover novel, well, I wasn't going to turn it down. The story is based on a Rudyard Kipling Jungle Book tale, the "Ruby Handled Dagger." A classic tale of greed which I set into the Trek universe. Since Patrick is (plays) my favorite character he gets the main action and is the most affected by the Devil's Heart. It is the most complex novel to-date with greater intertwining plots and more original characters than I have used before. (For more information: Read the book!!)

SS: I really hate asking this question but are you a fan?

CC: I am a member of the Deforest Kelley Fan Club and an executive board member of Patrick Stewart's fan club "Stargazers." While I was in high school I had a couple of stories published in T-Negative (#21 maybe) and Pastacler Vesla (Sp?). I also currently edit a fanzine under a pseudonym. (No, she didn't name the 'zine either so don't get your hopes up.)

SS: Ms. Carter was fun to talk to and I do like her style. Yay!  
A fan finally!!



wilson