

LOTUS STARBASE

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF LOTUS FLEET

ISSUE 17, DECEMBER 2015

"The adventure of life is to learn. The purpose of life is to grow. The nature of life is to change. The challenge of life is to overcome. The essence of life is to care. The opportunity of life is to serve. The secret of life is to dare. The spice of life is to befriend. The beauty of life is to give."

-- William Arthur Ward

LOTUS FLEET:: AN AUTHENTICALLY DEDICATED STAR TREK COMMUNITY

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Message from the Fleet Admiral's Office

Greetings Fleet members and friends of Lotus fleet.

As unimaginable as it is to believe, we are coming to a closure on the year 2015. This year brought quite a few changes to our fleet with more changes looming directly ahead. In January 2016 alone, we may see the launching of our new landing site format for Lotus Fleet, a new RP story begun, and an election of our top two officials initiated and concluded toward the end of the month.

Until such events occur, this is a time for me to reflect on what lies ahead with the fleet out here within our Starbase in cyberspace. Will we be able to bring greater activity and involvement on a more regular basis on-site and with events? What new developments or opportunities await us in 2016? This is our undiscovered country, the future... but the majority of any success we accomplish will be contingent on the level of activity and dedication of our members.

Our site will officially shift to Code Blue from Christmas Eve until New Year's Day. This doesn't mean that the site will be inaccessible, but the result could be that officers may not be available to respond to questions and such.

So from all of us in Lotus: Fleet Happy Holidays to all members and friends out there. Be safe and enjoy this time with friends and family.

Merrily,

Jeff T

Admiral Jeff T
Fleet Admiral





LOTUS FLEET

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LOTUS FLEET

Interview with Constantine

1. *Where are you from?*

USA, Michigan

2. *What is your position in the Fleet?*

SFA Professor of History and Operations

3. *When did you join Lotus Fleet?*

November 11th, 2015

4. *How did you find us? What was your first impression about the Fleet?*

I thought it was a well organized, well thought out Organization. LF members had done a lot of work in and out of the game and the Academy system was unlike nothing I'd ever seen before.

5. *What is your favorite Star Trek series?*

Enterprise

6. *What is your favorite Star Trek movie?*

First Contact

7. *Who is favorite Star Trek captain and why?*

Picard: He upholds Starfleet's principles and his own principles are aligned with those of SF and the Prime Directive. He has honor, courage and is loyal to his officers and crew. He makes me want for a better world and keeps me trying to better myself and do the right thing when my values are tested.

8. *What is your favorite Star Trek ship?*

Galaxy Class. It has a certain, artisan feel about how it was designed. It is luxurious and spacious with plenty of room for all types of operations that might be needed in a vessel of Exploration.

9. *Other than a captain do you have another favorite Star Trek character?* Shran, an Andorian from Enterprise. He is courageous, loyal, honorable and always strived for peace for his people.

10. *What is your favorite Star Trek uniform?*

The Next Generation: Films

11. *What keeps you interested in Star Trek despite the lack of a current episodic series?*

There is always another story to tell, another star to discover and another race to make first

contact with. I like to think ST is a never-ending force that will eternally continue to seek the best out of our future and out of everyone.

12. *Is there a character or actor you wish had never appeared in Star Trek?*

None.

13. *What are your thoughts on J.J. Abrams Star Trek movies?*

I like how they were filmed but I wasn't particularly happy with the story direction.

14. *Is there someone else you'd like to see direct a Star Trek film?*

Ridley Scott

15. *How do you think we can best apply Gene Roddenberry's vision today?*

Everyone should strive to improve themselves, help their fellow man and not focus upon the accumulation of wealth as a main driving force.

16. *Are you active in Star Trek Online?*

Yes

17. *What is your impression of the game today vice when it launched?*

I did not play it when it was launched.

18. *Do you believe Cryptic stays mostly true to Star Trek's vision?*

Yes but there are a lot of antagonists compared to the shows.

19. *What is your passion in life or your biggest aspiration?*

Everything I do, work or play is in an attempt at creating something. Be it words (Creative Writing, RP and Poetry) Engineering concepts or 3D models.

20. *What is your biggest peeve?*

Extreme selfishness.

21. *What would you say is the highlight in your life to this point?*

Watching my daughter becoming a successful and productive woman.

22. *What is one thing nobody in the Fleet knows about you?*

In 1988, when the East German wall came down I was there as an MP in the Army. I shook an East Germans officer's hand and he gave me part of one of the bricks that made up the wall.

23. *Could you describe yourself in 5 words?*

Creative, understanding, jokester, patient and attentive.

24. Do you have a personal motto?

"Death is certain, life is not." -Unknown

25. What advice would you give new members?

Play the game, take advantage of everything the Fleet has to offer, Join the Academy and have as much fun as possible.

26. How would you define leadership?

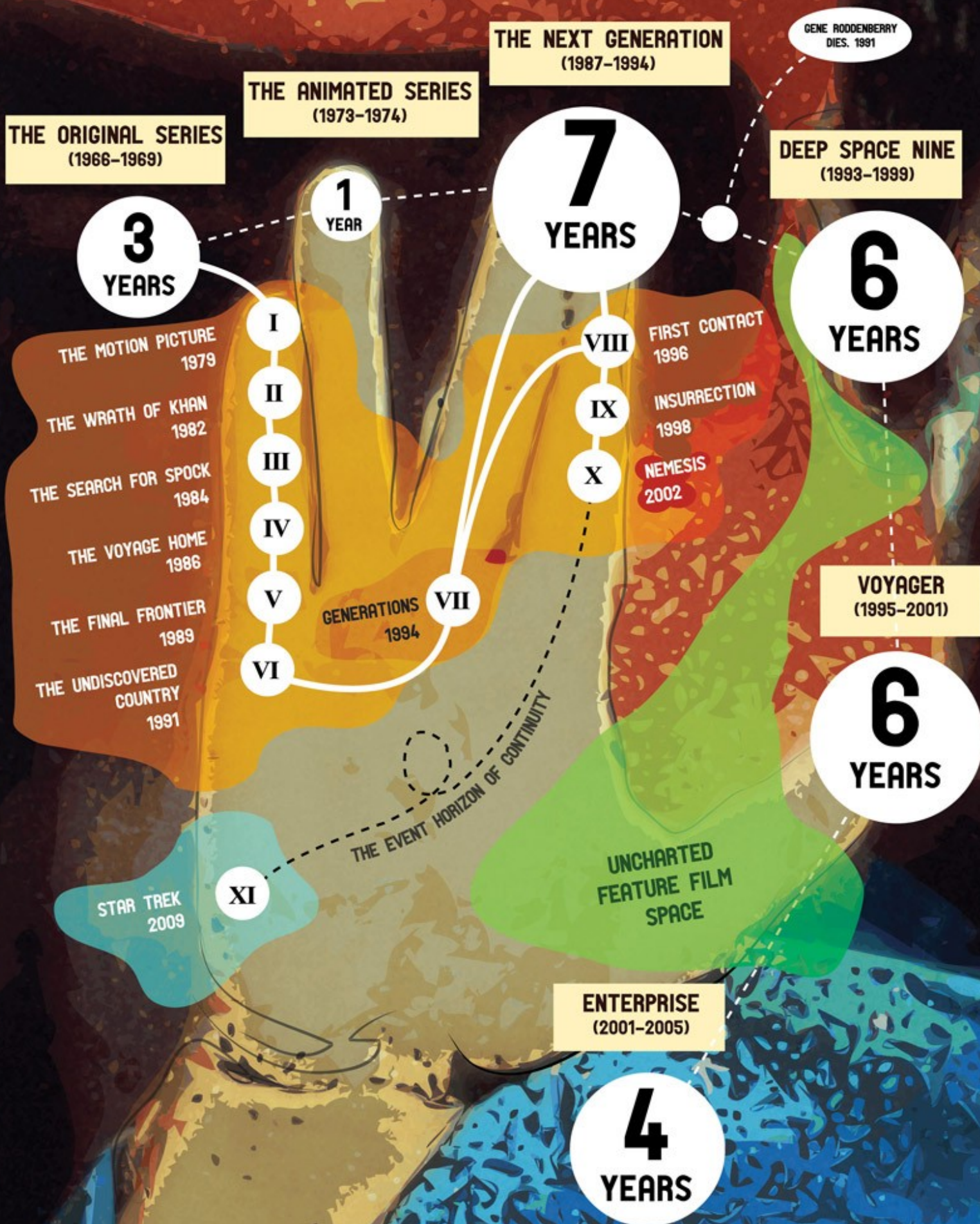
A good leader listens to those under their charge, inspires those around them to always improve, sets the example for others to follow and admits it when they make a mistake.

24. Are there any other thoughts or information that you'd like to add?

LF has a lot to offer above and beyond STO. In STO they have done a lot of work building Fleet Holdings and each member is kind, helpful and genuinely interested in all things ST and STO.



LIVE LONG AND PROSPER





Admiral Kheren here, reporting as always from the Lotus Fleet Role-playing Universe. The year-long saga of the current third fleet action Brave new World is coming to a close. The Draxx conflict is resolved, the fate of the USS Nuntio finally learned and the Zetarian menace is contained... almost.

**SECTOR 001 OF AZIMUTH HORIZON POCKET UNIVERSE
EDEN STAR SYSTEM
HIGH ORBIT OF EDEN IV
STARSHIP USS PHOENIX
STARDATE: 88299.9**

"Rogers to bridge; Regulation 46A."

Quickly cutting off the comm, David glanced again at Riker, noting the blue hue as it seemed to pulse in two shades. He didn't entirely trust these so-called good Zetarians yet, thus his succinct message to the bridge. Syntron would know his crew were not alone here, and perhaps devise a way to communicate into the transporter bay that none of them here could communicate out of without risking the Zetarians to hitch-hike on the signal.

As it were, Counselor Bijou certainly understood. And so did Jonathan Livingstone. Thinking quickly, he conferred with security officer Argyle and the liberated Borg nodded. The X'Ell then turned towards Syntron.

"Captain; since no encoded message should be sent on an open channel when hostile forces might be monitoring, as per the stated regulation, I propose to circumvent the Zetarians ability to travel through electromagnetic medium by using atmospheric vibration through the bulkhead adjoining the transporter room where they are detained."

"Meaning?" Wondered Bijou.

"With your permission, Captain, officer Argyle will go to the maintenance room next to transporter room 1. I will connect with his Borg implants through my *sheereess*. Anything we want to transmit to Commander Rogers would be done through him tapping in Morse code on the walls. Sound will carry communication without giving the Zetarians any mean of escaping."

"But... aren't sound waves electromagnetic in nature?" the counselor asked.

"Basically yes... but sound requires a physical medium and a mechanical force to travel; namely,



apparently two of the "good ones" are still inside, Commander Riker, but they wish to speak peacefully."

Adjusting his implant slightly and gesturing towards the phaser rifle laying at his feet, Argyle continued.

"With preliminary security protocols, it appears there is minimal threat in opening the transporter room to evacuate the crewmen inside."

"Maintain a security field around Commander Riker until the remaining crew are confirmed clear of Zetarian subjugation," Syntron ordered. "Afterward, complete a full-scan of the interior of the shuttle and the hangar bay to ensure that there are no entities lurking anywhere in the area or equipment. Once this has been established, you will follow me into the shuttle bay and stand guard while I converse with these remaining entities."

He then glanced at the phaser rifle positioned near his feet.

"We will release the crew only after we are certain that no further risk is involved."

A series of bleeps emanated from the transporter control console to Rogers' right and then the faint hue of the level ten force field moved, shrinking inside the bay to come to a halt surrounding only Commander Riker. Noting the relieved look on Lieutenant Hunter's eyes, and the stoic, yet determined glance of Lieutenant M'ata's, David looked toward Doctor Gray. The holographic entity, solid as he was, seemed slightly relieved as well. Perhaps only because three of his four charges were, relatively, out of harm's way. As soon as the force field ceased shrinking, forming a small but roomy circular shell around the Phoenix' first officer.

"We could all gather over here please, Lieutenants; Doctor Gray?"

Glancing around to the crew and agreeing that all were healthy, Doctor Gray nodded and gestured for the crew to follow. As the Firebird crew members gathered around Commander Rogers, the sentient EMH glanced back at Commander Riker, who had not moved.

"I am guessing you are going to have to stay here, old friend."

"This one understands, as do we," Riker responded with an energy echo in his voice.

After a moment, he tapped the small forcefield surrounding him and nodded in approval as the crew gathered around on the other side of the transporter room.

"You guys go on ahead, I'll wait here" the XO said in a voice that was clearly his own.

The security team meticulously checked the Firebird crew individually as they emerged together from the hangar bay. No signs of Zetarian influence were detected. Afterwards, full-passive scans of the interior of the shuttle and the hangar found only the entities within Commander Joshua Riker and those trapped earlier in a shuttlecraft. They were all contained within level 10 forcefields.

The captain ordered the crew of the Firebird to immediately report for a full medical analysis and diagnostics in sickbay before turning his attention to the assistant security chief.

"Lieutenant Argyle, follow me into the shuttle bay. Be prepared to respond accordingly in case anything runs afoul in there while I attempt to communicate with the remaining Zetarians."

"Aye, Captain," the liberated Borg answered, signaling for two guards to position themselves outside at the door.

"Here is an EVA suit for you, Sir. All systems including life support have been shut off inside the shuttle bay."



As soon as they were both suited and came in, the door was manually locked behind them. A brief shimmer of energy told them that another forcefield had been erected around the depowered and evacuated hangar bay. The only visible thing beside what their headlamps showed was the prison shuttle, reconfigured as a Faraday cage to secure the Zetarians Science chief Livingstone had lured in there.

"How do you intend to communicate with them, Captain?" asked Duncan, frowning behind his faceplate. "They can't use the shuttle systems and it's a sure bet that they don't know Morse code."

Nothing is ever easy, even when things seem under control. But how will they deal with the escaped aliens? How will relations with the Draxx unfold? What will happen to the people stranded on the planet... if they are even still alive? What will happen with colonists left on the neighboring class M planet? And has the contaminated Starbase Lotus reached its fatal deadline and now but a cloud of space debris in the Hromi cluster of our own universe?

December will see the conclusion of this massive story. It will be published in novelized PDF format right after that, so that everyone will be able to enjoy the entire third major story in our LF RP universe (near four hundred pages!) for the Holidays!

Starting in January, a new season will unfold, with brand new opportunities for Fleetmates, new and seasoned, to delve into our long standing RP history and add their own mark on our own Star Trek RP universe. More on that later; stay tuned on our website for the announcement in our Roleplay section!

In the meantime, from all of us in the Lotus Fleet Star Trek Role-playing Universe, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Next star to the right and straight on until morning... wait... sensors... what is that, right under that very bright star?

Kheren

Admiral Kheren
Fleet Executive Officer
RP Director



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LOTUS FLEET

Intercepted Intelligence File



Lotus Fleet Command File # 836-SFI-Car28CIS64-88296.9

To: Fleet Captain Allen Samji, Starbase Lotus;

Fr: Lt. Cmdr S'lar, SFI.

Intercepted Intelligence file from Ferengi Trade Authority to D'Kora Marauder Captain.

From: Legate Brunt, Ferengi Commerce Authority.

To: DaiMon Bractor, FAS Kreechta

File # 354L-534-Car98

Subject:

Cardassian (Former Lieutenant-Commander) Sorripto.

D.o.B.: Fed. Stardate 52570.0

P.o.B.: Cardassia Prime

Physical:

- Hgt.: 1.93m;
- Wgt. 107kg;
- Black hair;
- Green eye color.
- Pale skin color.



LOTUS FLEET

Parentage:

Father: Devin

Mother: Name unknown

Sibling: Suspected, none proven.

Former Lieutenant-Commander Sorripto is a 'Person-of-Interest' to the FCA. Connections at Earth's Starfleet Academy hint at strong emotional bond with Associate Dean of Academics. Considerable likelihood of ransom profit.

Graduated with honors (major in tactical) in only 3 years. Assigned USS MacKenzie, Starbase Lotus, Hromi Sector.

Strong sense of honor and commitment to duty. Subject has been court-martialed and sentenced from 6 to 24 months incarceration at Federation penal colony. Contact within facility suggest dubious result if subject approached in regards to racial lines, but possibility of manipulation regarding use of subjects suspected family ties(see reference file ## 354L-534-Car98(B): Agent 'Latinum': Eyewitness report on trial of Lt. Cmdr Sorripto, Starbase Lotus).

Note:

DaiMon, it is suggested that you pursue, on behalf of our mutual friends, the perceived ideology of using this disgraced Cardassian to further our plans regarding the Bajoran wormhole acquisition. Special regard toward subject's relocation and leverage upon said subject is advised.

End File.

Fleet Captain's Notes:

(Additional information acquired from classified source)

There is speculation that Sorripto's actions led to the eventual takedown of Section 31. While some splinter cells may still exist, as far as we can ascertain they are few and far between.

Word of what he did indicates that he played the system to take down an intelligence cell from the inside. However, we have no other corroborating information or evidence to verify such claims.

Our inquiry into this matter will continue.





Incoming Subspace Transmission
United Federation of Planets
Starfleet – USS Aleutian
Via Subspace relay Alpha 4721

Lotus Fleet, this is Admiral Athos on a delayed broadcast. With the conclusion of our war with the Iconians, and Starfleet on its way towards rebuilding the fleet and infrastructure, we are going back to the basics; to explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no one has gone before. To that end, the Aleutian is beyond the borders of Federation space in uncharted territory. Thus far, we have charted 2 class 3 nebulas, and 5 uninhabited star systems.

The events in the Lukari system are disconcerting. Now that we've finished one war, the last thing we need is to get involved in another, especially with the Tholians and especially having to do with multiple factions across time! Here we thought that the Tox Uthat was destroyed, yet it is still being used. Be mindful of anything seemingly out of place in your travels; it may play a part in this tangled time web we weave.

As for our Fleet Facilities, I'm happy to report that our Fleet Research Lab is almost fully complete. We are almost complete with upgrading our Research Facilities to Tier 3; all that is needed are common Science and Medical personnel. Once that is complete, we'll upgrade the Research Lab Facility to Tier 3. The Dilithium Mine, Embassy, and Spire are all completed maxed at Tier 3. All Featured Projects have been completed for every Fleet Holding. Finally, our Starbase is at Tier 4; we are making progress towards Tier 5 as the Comm Array (Science) is 1/3 of the way to Tier 5.

The one component that Lotus Fleet requires the most is common duty offices. Please reference this thread and work to help to fill the need: <http://www.lotusfleet.org/viewtopic.php?f=7&t=309>

Utopia Planitia has turned out another new starship based on lessons learned from the Iconian War; the Jupiter Class carrier starship: <http://www.arcgames.com/en/games/star-trek-online/news/detail/9667053>

Until next time Lotus Fleet,

Athos out.





USS Aleutian



LOTUS FLEET

STO Tips and Tricks by Rear Admiral Battle Lion

In this post I will discuss Basic Engineering Consoles.

The first consoles can be grouped all together. They add power to different subsystems and come in 4 flavors.

These consoles are junk. Even at highest level, they're only adding about 4 to your power level. Sell these to vendors when you get them for energy credits (EC). There are much better consoles to slot instead of these.

Armor consoles

These are useful, depending on which one you slot. In general, you only want the Neutronium. The others CAN be useful if you know you're going to be facing specific enemies. When I pvp'd I'd keep one of every armor, just in case.

Neutronium ally provides resistance to ALL energy types AND kinetic damage. For this reason it is the best.

Monotanium provides a resist to kinetic though, and much higher than Neutronium. However it does not protect against energy damage. I use a Monotanium on my Tvaro class because it has no shields most of the time and I get a lot of kinetic splash damage.

All other armors are junk and you can sell them. Some might be worth looking at on the exchange and selling there, but probably only rare or higher ones. Most ships have a Neutronium on them. The dilithium mine has the BEST Neutronium though, so sell all the ones you get as drops, and buy a DILMINE consoles. Also, armor has DIMINISHING RETURNS. Meaning, one is probably enough. They don't stack well at all.

A lot of end game ships don't have ANY at all. I dropped mine a few months ago and I barely noticed a difference.

Note: this damage resistance bonus ONLY affects your hull. Not your shields.

SIF Generator

This console buffs your hull repair stat, and isn't bad if you have nothing else. I mostly junk these, but check the prices on the higher level, higher rarity ones. The exchange is a great way to make money. There are better consoles though.

Emergency Force fields

Another junk console. All it does is try to keep your crew alive. Crew dies so fast it isn't even worth it. Sell these to a vendor.

RCS Accelerator

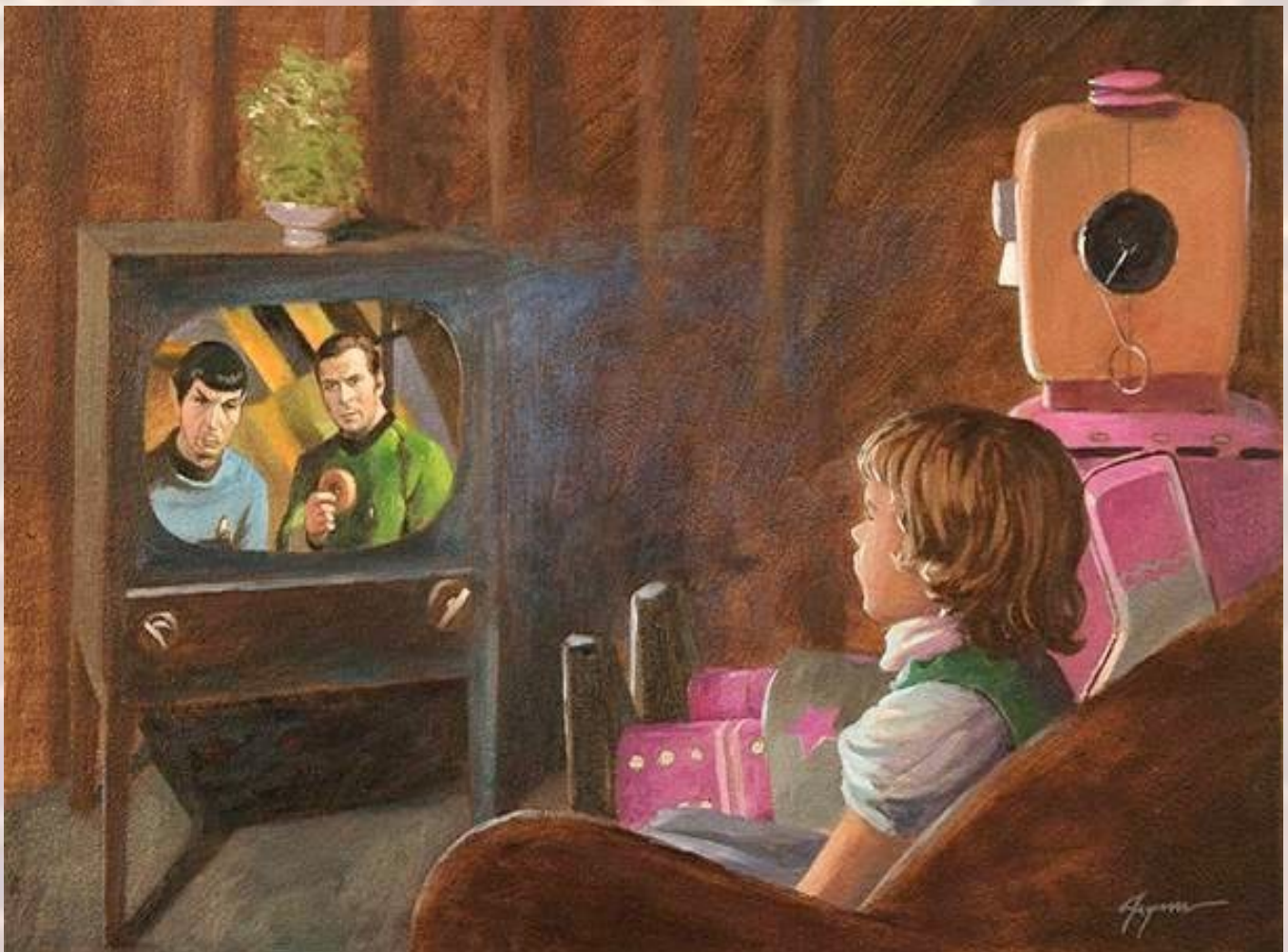
Pretty good console for just about everyone. If you don't have anything better to slot, load up on these. They stack well and who doesn't like turning? Higher mark versions can sell for decent money.

EPS Flow Regulator

Once this was good. Now it's not. Boosts your power transfer rate. Again, if you have NOTHING else, you can slot these. It will help with beam over capping, and increase the effectiveness of EPTx powers, but really it's to be replaced as soon as you have something better.

In all seriousness, engineering consoles are garbage. Turn can be added with other sources now, so RCS is not really a good option, and armor resistance can be stacked with traits and gear sets now. Engineering is the best place to put the coveted universal consoles. That's about it.

Science consoles will be discussed in the next issue.



Fleetwide Meetings:

(check the site Calendar for your local time)

Occurs every: 3rd Sunday of month - every month UTC - 5 hours [DST]

This is our Fleet meeting to discuss Lotus Fleet business, events, and other important information.

Afterward, the meeting goes "unofficial" and unrecorded into a round table, where anyone may have a chance to speak; i.e. ask questions, present ideas, etc... This is the social aspect of our meeting and provides an opportunity to get to know everyone involved in the Fleet even better.

Think of it as our Fleet's Ten Forward

Each meeting will be held on TeamSpeak 3. Please download and install TS3 following this guide:

<http://www.lotusfleet.org/viewtopic.php?f=34&t=55>

Also, please RSVP so that we know who is planning to attend, and indicate if you will be bringing a guest.

Invited: Everyone



LOTUS FLEET

Awards, Promotions and Organ Donations

New Members:

Acting Ensign jmw121

Lieutenant(j.g.) Constantine

Promotions:

Battle Lion: *(see promotion announcement on the next page)*

Lieutenant Arina: promoted to Lieutenant-Commander and leveled from Tier 2 to Tier 3 in her new role now as Provisional Newsletter Editor.

Lieutenant(j.g.). Constantine assigned to Academy - Professor of Operations and History

Longevity:

None

Awards:

Lieutenant(j.g.). Constantine : Academy Honor Graduate
Lotus Fleet Instructor Badge
Outstanding Post



Promotion Announcement
Vice Admiral Battle Lion
Operations Division Executive Officer

Having joined Lotus Fleet over six years ago (4 April 2009), Rear Admiral Battle Lion is one of our longest standing members. Upon graduating Lotus Fleet Academy with Honors, Battle Lion worked his way up through the enlisted ranks by being active in Fleet activities and generally contributing to the Fleet. Battle Lion entered the officer ranks as a forum moderator (Lt JG – Lt Cmdr) before taking on an activities-based role as a Task Force Shift Commander (Cmdr – Fleet Capt). These shift commander positions were based on time zones so that Lotus Fleet would have a member leader online to help other members of that time zone. When the Task Force idea was reorganized, Battle Lion was chosen to be the Tier 4 Group Commander (Capt – Fleet Capt) in charge of all members that did not take up a position.

When Lotus Fleet again reorganized and the Group Commander position went away, Battle Lion entered the flag officer ranks as the Deputy Judge Advocate General (Fleet Capt – Commodore). Later, Battle Lion moved into the Judge Advocate General (Commodore to Rear Admiral) Tier 4 billet. All previous positions and level of activity highlighted Battle Lion's potential for greater responsibility and so became the Command Division Executive Officer (Commodore to Rear Admiral) Tier 5 which he held for a time. Lotus Fleet lost Battle Lion for a time when he had a case of real life, however, upon his return, was picked up as the Operations Division Executive Officer which is the current position being held.

As Operations Division Executive Officer, Battle Lion has been incredibly active with activities which are the primary goal for the Operations Division. Battle Lion is well-known as the go-to expert in Star Trek Online regarding ship building and equipment; if you ever want to know options or great gear for your ship or ground character, Battle Lion is who you need to discuss. Every newsletter we get a great article on how to do something in STO, a nice tips & tricks read.

In Lotus Fleet history, it has been a rare thing to be promoted to the rank of Vice Admiral. Several personnel have been appointed to the rank of Vice Admiral due to the position they were hired into having that minimum rank requirement. Over the past almost 8 years of Lotus Fleet history, only an elite few have been promoted from Rear Admiral to Vice Admiral while holding the same position, including Athos, Jaime Donaldson and Jeff T.

Congratulations Vice Admiral Battle Lion! Keep up the great work!





Late To The Party: A New Players Take On Star Trek Online & Lotus Fleet Late In 2015.

Part 1: So many Games, So Little Time.

I will start off by saying that I have been an avid Star Trek fan for most of my life. TOS, The animated series, the books and everything that came after. Like most things Sci-fi and Fantasy related, it was in my blood. Gene Roddenberry had me at "Space, The Final Frontier". Since Star Wars came out in 1977, I simply couldn't get enough. Books, Shows, movies and the Iconic music that only had to start playing for me to relive those movies and shows all over again in my head. I rarely forgot what I saw, read and heard and for me the genre was a comfort for me when things were not so rosy.

Rush forward about 22 years since the release of Star Wars: A new Hope and in 1999 the true 3D MMORPG Genre came into being. Sure there were others before that but Everquest was really what got me to build my own PC, buy a decent (expensive) modem and jump into another world with my friends. It was harsh, raw, difficult and also, very addictive. I still managed to have a real life away from my PC but when I did indulge in my favorite past-time and main hobby that was Gaming, I was dead to all 4 dimensional beings. I took vacation days off to do raids or camp mobs that took upwards of two days to complete sometimes. For anyone who camped the Griffin in Ice-clad Ocean for the piece it dropped for the Eyepatch quest, you know what I'm talking about!

Between Everquest of 1999 and today there were so many games, and so little time to play them. And I mean ALOT of games. Many of which are MMORPGs. Fantasy, Medieval, Science Fiction, Gothic and just plain weird. Each with a new world to explore and a new story to be apart of. Some better than others to be sure but for nearly a decade, Everquest kept me coming back to it for another jaunt across the lands of Norrath. To this day no game has ever captured me the way Everquest has. I no longer play it now but perhaps someone will resurrect it anew in the coming years. *cough* Pantheon *cough*

February 2, 2010 was the day that the servers of STO first came online. Developed by Cryptic Studios, the game was set in the late 25th century about 30 years after the events of Star Trek: Nemesis. Just shy of 2 years later, STO went Free-To-play and just over 2 years after that it was playable on a Mac PC. Wiki Source Unfortunately for me and STO, in 2009, Cryptic came out with Champions Online. A very dumbed down, repetitive mess that was really fun...for about 3 months! Being a long-time gamer I have created a phrase called 'The 3 month Chuck'. Most games, MMOs, Single-player and the like, you play them for about 3 months then you 'Chuck' them onto your shelf or into the closet. A lot of game developers, well since WoW (World of Warcraft) anyway used a repetitive cookie cutter mold to mold their games from. What this did was get people to swarm it when they release but move one after the 'newness' of the game wore off. Champions Online was one of these games.

Fast forward less than a year later and Cryptic Studios released Star Trek Online. Something that I had waited for with baited breath. An MMORPG set in the Star Trek Universe. Most of the Star Trek games that came out before STO were bad. I mean REALLY bad. Afterthoughts that a



game publisher bought the rights to release just because they thought all 'Star Trek' fans would eat up anything just because it had 'Star Trek' on the box. (Ok...so, I fell for it just like everyone else) However by 2010 I had learned my lesson and more and more I began to learn what I could about a game before I bought into it. What I learned about STO...did not leave me feeling confident that it would be the game I had hoped for. People who had played in the Alpha and beta called it a 'reskinned version of Champion online'. The review was so damning I choked down my disappointment and decided NOT to buy the game!

Part 2: A Good Fleet is hard to Find

Early this year, I'm not sure why I decided to step away from the MMORPG games I had been playing and give them a rest but I had. I decided to catch up on some shows I had missed and play a few single player games for a bit. For some reason I was playing 'Pirates' and sailing around the Oceans looking for loot and plunder AND watching the show 'Black Sails'. Something my dad had told me about but I had missed it entirely. I combed through 'Steam' and 'GoG' for deals on games and after I finished the episodes of 'Black Sails' I started Watching 'Enterprise' again. (I have all ST shows and movies saved in a Hard Drive) What I noticed is that the way the ships flew and fought it reminded me a lot of how it worked in the Pirate game. And then I remembered Starfleet Command III and how fun that game was but I no longer had the box and Cds. A simple search on Steam for Star Trek games and what do you know, Star Trek Online was there as well. It was Free to play and a Starter pack was only \$25.

If you're like me, you do a little 'Googling' to find out all you can about a product before purchase. To learn about an MMORPG, especially one as old as STO, was not difficult. In fact there was so much information, it became daunting to say the least. After nearly 6 years and a new Star Trek show in the works, it appeared to me that a lot of people were playing STO. And Cryptic Studios was no longer involved with the title. It had gone to Perfect World Entertainment and then Arc Games and Arc games had its own software like Steam did to manage the games you buy from them. It also had a forum and this is where I found Lotus Fleet.

I've been involved with enough MMOs and how they work to know that success in STO would involve finding a good guild or in STOs case, a good Fleet. I looked in a lot of different places for information about Fleets including this one: Arc Games Forums Out of the 18 Fleets listed there, Lotus Fleet was the 11th fleet down from the top and it had caught my eye. After looking at the Fleet site and seeing the Academy and how much work had been done, it was a no brainer to send in an app. and get this party started.

To look at the sites front page. I'll be honest. It's busy. There is a lot of information and many facets to it. 3 things in particular that caught my eyes. First, there was an up to date Event Header. Ok, so this Fleet still has stuff going on. It also had a shout box that had people chiming in that morning. Having an active Fleet was important to me. Several of the ones I looked at before Lotus Fleet were not so active as this. Then I saw the 'Academy' tab on the upper left. After signing up and viewing the Video and Webpage Orientation I knew that the people of Lotus Fleet had done an immense amount of work and wanted to make their STO experience a lot more than just a



group of people grouping up to do Fleet Actions in the MMO. There were Ranks, Programs Plans, Professors and Courses to take. An RP system where everyone who wanted to participate HAD to take 2 courses in the Academy just to be eligible. This Lotus Fleet didn't just want members, they wanted a commitment and for me that was a big part of why I joined even though I barely had my feet wet in the game at that point.

Part 3: He's Dead Jim.

Forum after forum, topic after topic, and for someone new like me, finding the specific help and information I needed was not so easy. The STO Academy was a good resource for a lot of it but a lot of the help was in terms someone who had been playing should understand. What's a CRF2? Or ChtD? I didn't have a clue and who knew that a Cruiser was a broadsider? I surely didn't! As I said before, STO is a well-developed game. With a well-developed game, there is a learning curve. I know about learning curves, I played EVE for over a year. Dilithium, Energy Credits, Fleet Credits, Fleet Marks, Expertise, Skill Points, Reputation, Admiralty, R&D and the list goes on and on. There is a lot to do in STO. Just hitting the dailies that give you Dilithium and the Fleet quests that give you Fleet Credits and Marks was something I would have never known unless I had looked it up or someone told me about them. And these take time. A couple hours each day to complete them all before you get to the actual adventuring. Or in my case, gunning ships down with my Phaser Cannons! The first character I made I made them a Tactical Cruiser driver. So naturally you point your ship and fire beams and torpedoes then turn around and fire more beams and torpedoes from aft, right? Wrong! And I have the broken ship to prove it. And there are weapons that fire 45°, 90°, 250° and 360°. And there is Plasma, Photon, Quantum, Antiproton, Proton, Disruptor, Phaser etc. etc. And Beams, Cannons, Torpedoes, Escorts and Cruisers and Battleships. Then of course, there is the ground side of things. Personal Shields, Pistols, Rifles and Melee Weapons. "He's Dead Jim!" I have fallen FAR more often on the ground than while in my ship. I have found far fewer tactics for the ground missions than I have for the ship runs.

For someone new to the game it is important to have a lot of patience and a will to learn either by instruction or just by doing it. I.E. Getting in your ship and flying around. That much you can do fairly easily. If you're not sure about ship combat, just fly around to different systems until you see a "Patrol Mission" pop up. Start that and you'll learn combat pretty quickly by hook or by crook though there is a tutorial. (Thank god) Early on in my Starfleet career I asked for help from a guy who called out in Zone Chat that he needed a device. I had the device in question and he tried to invite me to his ship so I could give it to him. Naturally he assumed I knew what I was doing. I did not. After about 5 minutes of explaining to me what I had to do I finally made it to his ship. Then he told me about a nice Personal Shield I could get by repeating one of the missions. He neglected to tell me that at the top of the Mission Window were tabs and that to get to 'Episodes' you needed to tab left then scroll down to the mission and hit, 'repeat'. That took another 10 minutes so I can attest to feeling like an idiot when people assume you know what you are doing.



Lotus Fleet though has been a remarkable resource. Not only are its officers genuinely interested and well-versed in most any part of STO they've done a lot of work in the game. On The HUD in the upper right there is a button at the bottom that will bring up the 'Fleet' window. Fleet Starbase, Fleet Dilithium Mine, Fleet Spire, Fleet Embassy and Fleet Research lab. All at your disposal and you can Transwarp to them in the blink of an eye. When you join Lotus Fleet, all that time and energy they've spent? You can take immediate advantage of and I highly recommend that you do. If you go the 'Free-To-Play' route, you can get ships to fly, Bridge Officers to man your stations, Duty officers to do missions or join your ship for Active duty all by just paying the game. You get to use all the Fleet Holdings and be a part of the Lotus Fleet community that goes beyond just STO. If you want, take part in the RP, Join the Academy and actually feel like you're a new Cadet trying to pass your classes and go above and beyond that of your peers. I have found STO is a lot more fun now that I am a part of Lotus Fleet and I've only just arrived.

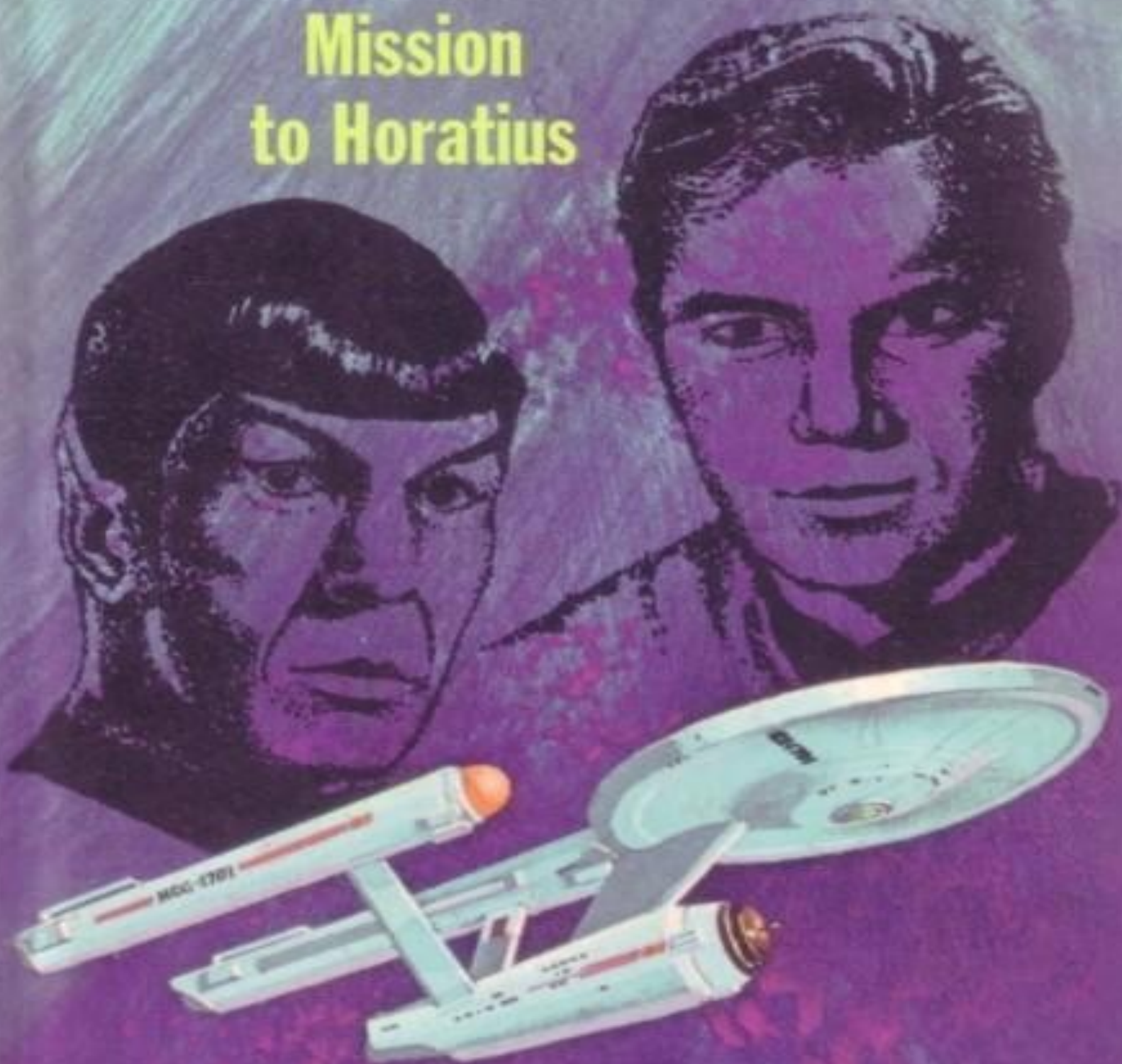
Lieutenant Cassidy Constantine
U.S.S. Constantine
Academy Professor: History and Operations
Lotus Fleet



LOTUS FLEET

STAR TREK

Mission to Horatius



AUTHORIZED EDITION

6. RATNAPPED

THE OTHER FIVE of the group from the *Enterprise* stared at Chekov in utter disbelief. McCoy blurted, "He took it. Before I had time to warn you all and before I analyzed the evil stuff, he must have taken a sip."

Captain Kirk darted a look from the Mythran to Ensign Chekov and back again. "And now I suppose you consider that this junior officer of mine is in your power."

The Supreme Exarch was examining the phaser. "Its workings seem simple enough," he mused. "More advanced than our own side arms. Undoubtedly you can supply us with an ample number, along with other weapons." He turned his eyes to Ensign Chekov, who was staring happily at him. "You answer the captain's question, my son. Are you in my power?"

Chekov said blissfully, "All power is in the hands of Your Extreme Holy. Command me; I obey."

The Mythrans who were gathered about the throne chuckled. Their leader, also amused, turned back to Captain Kirk. "And you will feel the same when you have taken your anodyne, Captain."

James Kirk looked at his officers. "Comments, gentlemen?"

Dr. McCoy blurted out, "They'll have their work cut out getting me to take any of that poison."

"Or me," Scotty snapped.

The Supreme Exarch said with deceptive mildness, "I suggest to you, Captain Kirk, that the life of your young officer is in my hands. I have only to request it and he will gladly commit suicide. Does this affect your opinions?"

Captain Kirk opened his mouth to bark a reply, but Spock spoke up.

"Ah, Captain. I suggest that we are in an untenable position, and hence that you demonstrate to His Extreme Holy the *other* device that you carry."

Kirk stared at him, and for a moment the Vulcan was afraid that his superior had failed to get his message. But then the captain's eyes widened ever so slightly, and he put his hand in his tunic and drew out his communicator.

The Mythrans stared at it suspiciously.

Captain Kirk said, "Its workings are simple." He lifted the antenna grill.

"Cover him," the Supreme Exarch snapped, and a dozen of the primitive phasers that were the side arms of the Mythrans were immediately trained on Kirk and the others.

Captain Kirk made a shrug of deprecation. "By Federation law my hands are largely tied, so far as doing harm to you is concerned. However, if there were any possible way for us to escape, we would."

Warren, ruler of all Mythra, chuckled. "There is none," he said. "Your junior officer is under my domination. And the rest of you are covered by my priests. Tell me what this new device does." But at that moment the group from the *Enterprise*, including Ensign Chekov, turned misty and disappeared, leaving a collection of gaping pseudopriests behind them.



Back in the transporter room the group materialized on the circular platform from which they had been beamed down to the surface of Mythra less than an hour earlier.

Ensign Chekov, his face still smiling, but a worried strangeness in his eyes, protested, "But I do not want to leave Mythra."

Captain Kirk didn't even bother to look at him, but strode down the steps from the light panel upon which he had materialized and confronted the intercom viewing screen.

He barked into it, "Security Lieutenants Kellum and Masaryk, report to the transporter room immediately, if you please."

The others were following him down into the room. Captain Kirk looked at Dr. McCoy. "Your opinion about the condition of this young fool, Bones?"

The doctor shrugged and looked at the younger man, thinly veiling his disgust "I'll have to look him over in the sick bay. However, in view of the fact that that phony priesthood evidently makes each citizen take anodyne every day, it obviously wears off in a twenty-four-hour period."

Masaryk and Kellum hurried into the transporter room, mystified.

Kirk said, "You will escort Ensign Chekov to the sick bay and keep close watch over him until further orders. I said *close* watch. Mr. Chekov is a very sick man, and for the moment I'm afraid that he cannot be trusted."

"But I don't *want* to leave Mythra," Chekov wailed. However, he submitted amiably enough to the two security men and marched obediently from the compartment.

Kirk said to the transporter officer, "A bit of delicate thievery is in order. Down below, in the temple, in the same room from which you just rescued us, is Ensign Chekov's phaser, probably still in the hands of the so-called Supreme Exarch. I would think that with a bit of fine work with tractor beam and transporter you could recover it"

"Aye, aye, sir." The transporter officer turned to his controls, frowning in concentration.

"And, mister, let me congratulate you on your prompt cooperation in that ridiculous situation." The transporter officer grinned at him. "Your message couldn't have been clearer, Captain. When you said into your communicator that if there were any possible way for you to escape, you would, I just beamed you up."

The captain looked around at the rest. "Let's adjourn to the briefing room and go over this."

A short time later, still disgusted, James Kirk took the end chair at the large _table in the briefing room and motioned the others to be seated.

"Gentlemen," he said, "let us have comments on this fouled-up situation."

"Comments?" said Dr. McCoy. "I'll make a comment. This silly mission is a wild-goose chase. I suggest we make our way back to the nearest Starfleet Command Center."

"I might have known better than to ask your opinion, Bones. Your feelings are already on record. What about you, Scotty?"

Montgomery Scott said slowly, "One thing seems fairly obvious, Captain. Mythra was not the source of the distress call, nor is it the base of the beastie raiders of Neolithia."

The captain frowned thoughtfully. "From what you saw, you don't think they have the technology either to send such a call nor to cross space to Neolithia?"

Scott shook his head decisively.



Spock added, "Besides, what technology they have is in the hands of the so-called priests. They would hardly issue a call for help—when they were so anxious to keep from us the manner in which they have dominated their people."

"I think you're correct. The question now becomes this: What are we to do about Mythra and our friend the Supreme Exarch?"

Scott snapped, "What *can* we do? General Order Number One prevents us from interfering with the internal affairs of that beastie planet and particularly any institutions such as religion."

Spock said thoughtfully, "Whatever the original colonists might have believed in, certainly today the United Temple is made up of a small group of corrupt men who have, through drugs, seized control of the whole planet and enslaved the people."

"Unfortunately," Kirk mused, "we are too far from the nearest star base to get instructions within any reasonable time, even utilizing subspace and space warp communications. However, they would hardly authorize a deliberate military attack upon Mythra's government. We are far, far away from Federation jurisdiction."

Dr. McCoy said slowly, "Perhaps an attack on our part wouldn't be required, Jim."

They all looked at him.

"I'd have to put it on my laboratory computers, of course, but as I recall the hallucinogens, a very minute amount of the drugs is usually required to cause the effect they have upon the brain."

Kirk said, "What's that got to do with it, Bones?"

"Also, a very small amount of antidote would be required to counteract the effect"

"Very interesting indeed," Spock said, "but I fail to see the connection with our problem, Doctor."

But McCoy was continuing to muse. "I wonder just how long it would take for the people of Mythra to revolt against their pseudopriest masters if they were freed of the effects of the anodyne." Scott said impatiently, "How could you free them from its effects, mon? The confounded religion calls for every citizen on the planet—save the head laddies themselves—to take the stuff daily. They're under its beastie effects twenty-four hours a day."

The doctor was continuing to think his way along, even as he talked. "As I remember, when we first scanned the capital of Mythra on the bridge viewing screen, it was notable that the city's water supply consisted of but one reservoir."

Light was beginning to come through to both Spock and Captain Kirk.

Spock said thoughtfully, "Just how minute a quantity of antidote would be required?"

"As I say, I'll have to put it on the computers. In fact, I'll have to analyze this anodyne drug. Happily, we have poor Chekov all dosed up with it, and I can use him for my analysis."

Kirk came to a quick decision. "Very well, Bones. Go to work on it immediately. Turn out an antidote for the anodyne. We'll manufacture a sufficient quantity to dose the whole reservoir. Your point is obvious. Everybody has to drink water every day. We'll free the capital city of Mythra, at least, from the anodyne before the Supreme Exarch and his gang know what's happened. Then it will be up to the Mythrans themselves to throw off their yoke, first in their capital city, and then, town by town, over the rest of the planet. The senior priesthood is a mere handful. It would seem that freedom, once given a start, would avalanche from town to town."



He stood, preparatory to leaving for the bridge. "If all goes well, we can beam your antidote down to the reservoir at night, and not a soul on Mythra will be the wiser."

Dr. Leonard McCoy looked up from the screen of his medical computer at his head nurse. There was a spark of humor in his eye and jubilation in his voice.

"Why, this is considerably simpler than I had even hoped for. Whoever, among those pseudo-priests, first concocted this psychedelic tranquilizer was obviously unacquainted with other than the primitive research in the field."

Christine Chapel said, "As you know, Dr. McCoy, I have several degrees in research medicine, but I must admit my studies of the hallucinogens have been neglected. The universities in which I worked seemed to have reached the conclusion that they were old hat" The doctor was still chortling happily, even as he made a few notes. "One fascinating aspect of working on a starship such as the *Enterprise*, nurse. Somewhere in the reaches of the galaxy you will find just about anything—in medicine, or otherwise. On one planet the inhabitants will still be utilizing boomerangs in warfare; on another, aspirin is still used as a cure for headache."

"Aspirin?" She frowned. "It seems to me as though I may have read something about that as a student of medical history."

"A white crystalline derivative of salicylic acid," he said absently. He stared at the notes he had taken. "I think I'll take this down to Scotty. We could probably make it ourselves right here, but I hate to use up so much of our remaining supplies. And he should have most of this in basic chemical stores."

"We *are* running terribly short," she agreed.

Dr. McCoy left the sick bay, still highly pleased with himself, went out into the corridor, and took the first turbo-lift. He requested the senior engineering officer's office and within minutes was in Scotty's presence.

The Scotsman, seated behind his desk, a welter of reports before him, looked up. "Well, Bones, is it important? I'm in a wee bit of a dither here."

McCoy said happily, "Can you do me up about ten pounds of this, Scotty? If you can, we're in the anti-phony-priesthood business."

"Already?" Scotty said. He frowned down at the notes. "Is this all? You mean if we drop only ten pounds of this in that wee loch they have in the hills above their town, the beastie effects of that anodyne will be ended?"

"For at least a week."

Scott threw a switch, then read from the reports into a desk mike.

He came to his feet. "Let's go, mon. We can pick it up on our way to the transporter room." It was McCoy's turn to be taken aback. "It will be ready so soon?"

The engineer looked at him loftily. "It took the medical department less than an hour to concoct it. Why do you think it should take my chemical engineers more than ten minutes to manufacture it?"

"Pardon me," Dr. McCoy said dryly.



In the transporter room they found the transporter officer to whom the captain had given the job of retrieving Ensign Chekov's phaser. He was chuckling. The phaser in question was sitting on the console.

He said, without need of further explanation, "You should have seen the look on his face." Dr. McCoy held up his ten-pound package of antidote. "And here is our return present to our friend the Supreme Exarch."

The other frowned, not understanding.

The doctor said, "This is your department, not mine. All we want you to do is transport this down to their reservoir."

Scott said, "Aye, and I think possibly it had better materialize about twenty feet under the surface. Give it plenty of time to dissolve before there is any chance of anybody spotting it Whoosh, that bunch are going to have the surprise of their lives."

The transporter officer shrugged his lack of comprehension, but took the packet and carried it toward the circular platform and one of its six light panels.

In a matter of minutes the antidote had been transported to the Mythran reservoir. It was all that the crew of the *Enterprise* could do. The Supreme Exarch's subjects would have their chance at freedom.

Sulu entered the wardroom, put his hands on his hips, and looked about accusingly. Only a dozen or so were present, and most of them were obviously burdened with the depressing air of boredom which was now suffusing the whole ship.

Someone called, "Are we on the new course to ... what's the name of this final planet?"

"Bavarya, wasn't it?" someone else said listlessly.

Sulu nodded. "We're on the new course," he said, still eyeing them suspiciously.

Someone else called, "How's Chekov?"

"He's completely recovered," Sulu replied. "And the Mythran operation came off like a dream.... I'd like to know if it was one of you jokers."

Uhura, who had been fiddling with her guitar while scowling at its missing two strings, looked up to say, "What are you talking about, Sulu?"

"Somebody ratnapped Mickey while I was busy with Grang."

Now everyone looked at him as though he had suddenly gone off his rocker.

"Did what?" Lieutenant Chang said.

"Mickey's been stolen."

"Oh, don't be ridiculous," Freeman said, an edge of irritation in his voice. "Who'd steal a rat? Besides, how could anyone hide him? I'll bet you left the door to your quarters open and he got away. Have you had the doc check you for cafard?"

"I'm sure he'll turn up, Sulu," Uhura said. "He's probably running up and down the corridors this very minute looking for something to eat. He'll be happy when he's caught."

Sulu said darkly, "The door to my quarters was closed, and, what's more, I had him in a cage which the boys in the metals workshop did up for me. He couldn't have gotten away on his own." He sat down abruptly and glared around at them.



However, if facial expression meant anything, all present were innocent of the crime of ratnapping.

Freeman repeated, "But who'd want to steal a rat?"

Lieutenant Chang said, "He'll turn up." She looked over at the communications officer. "Uhura, what kind of a tune can you coax out of that box with only three strings left?"

Uhura looked wry. "Not much, I'm afraid. But how's this?"

She began to strum, then hum, preparing to sing.

A string went *ping*.

It was on the following watch that Communications Officer Uhura looked up suddenly.

"Captain!"

"Yes, Lieutenant?" Captain James Kirk had been sitting quietly in his command chair, brooding. An hour earlier he had had another session with Dr. McCoy, who had reported twenty crewmen now in stasis. Kirk was beginning to suspect that the doctor might be correct, that this whole assignment was meaningless. Except for the fact that raiders from space were hitting both Neolithia and Mythra, he would have been tempted to admit defeat and return to the nearest star base for the rest and refitting which he, as well as McCoy, was fully aware the *Enterprise* needed.

Uhura said urgently, "I am picking up a subspace communication, Captain."

"Ah? Bring it in, Lieutenant" He flicked a switch on his command chair.

"Aye, aye, sir."

Captain Kirk said, "Captain James Kirk, United Space Ship *Enterprise* of United Federation of Planets here."

A voice said, "You are entering the territory of the planet Bavarya."

"We are aware of that. Who is speaking, please?"

"This is *Oberst* Muller of Planetary Defense Command. It is forbidden for you to enter Bavarian jurisdiction without permission."

"Very well," Kirk said dryly. "How do I manage to secure permission?"

There was a short silence.

"Well, *Oberst*... ?" Kirk said.

"There is no manner in which you can secure permission to enter Bavarian space. Military spacecraft are forbidden to enter our jurisdiction."

"I see. However, *Oberst* Muller, the *Enterprise* is not exactly a military craft in the old sense of the word. The *Enterprise* is a patrol starship operating under Starfleet Command of the Federation. We have approached Bavarya in response to a call of distress. I am afraid, *Oberst*, I must request that you check with higher authority and call me back. Captain Kirk, over and out."

He flicked off the switch and looked over at Spock. "Comments?"

Spock said, "At last, Captain, we have come upon a more advanced culture than that which prevails on the other Horatian planets—a culture, it would seem, capable of sending both the distress call and expeditions to Neolithia and Mythra. I would suggest, Captain, that the deflectors be activated. Our *Oberst* Muller might be a bit precipitate."



"Your point is well taken, Mr. Spock. Mr. Sulu, activate the ship's deflector shields and adjust them to the third magnitude."

"Aye, aye, sir."

"And while we're awaiting *Oberst* Muller, we might as well take a look at this Bavarya." He touched controls, brought the planet in question into the bridge viewing screen, and rapidly increased magnification.

"Another Class-M planet, of course, Mr. Spock?"

Spock was busily taking readings from his hooded screen at his library computer station.

"Yes, Captain, remarkably similar to the other two planets, with the exception here that the percentage of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere would indicate a high industrial development and the use of fossil fuels such as petroleum."

Kirk said testily, "I am getting tired of planets that reject our assistance no matter how selflessly it's offered. All three of these Horatian worlds seem to wish to remain hermits among the planets." He increased magnification again and frowned as a moderately large city swam into view.

"Mr. Spock, refresh me on our information on Bavarya."

"Yes, sir. It is the most recently settled—less than a century ago. The original colonists numbered approximately one thousand political malcontents from Earth itself."

"Did you say less than a century?"

Spock looked at him. "Yes, Captain."

"Mr. Spock, as a rough estimate, what would you say the population of that city in the viewing screen might be?"

Spock stared at the screen, and even as he took it in, his face registered uncharacteristic surprise.

"Very interesting, Captain, and your point is well taken. I would estimate at least one hundred thousand citizens. I am assuming that it is what it would appear to be, a city similar to one of the middle twentieth century."

"See what you can find in the library banks, Mr. Spock, that might pertain."

Spock bent over his hood for a few moments. When he looked up again, there was disbelief in his Vulcan face.

"Captain, it would seem that an increase that could be termed a population explosion would result in a doubling of the number of citizens in fifteen years. Even with advanced medicine and the most fruitful of conditions, the most healthful of climates, and the absence of pestilence and war, such an increase in less than fifteen years cannot be expected."

Captain Kirk scowled at his first officer and then let his eyes go back to the city on the screen. He decreased magnification and scanned the planet surface quickly, going over towns, villages, and cities. He finally settled on one of the latter and zeroed in on it as before.

He said, "Mr. Spock, given a doubling of population every fifteen years, which seems a fantastic speed, what would a population beginning with one thousand be in a century?"

Spock put it on the computer. "In a century it would be one hundred and twenty-eight thousand."



"I submit, Mr. Spock, that one city below has a population of at least that."

"It would appear so, Captain."

"And from what we have seen of the rest of the planet surface, it would be difficult to gauge its population at less than five million."

Captain Kirk flicked on his command chair intercom and pressed a button connecting it with the computer banks. He said, "Is it possible for a population of one thousand to increase to over five million within a period of less than a century?"

Within seconds the mechanical-sounding computer voice came through. "*It is impossible.*"

Lieutenant Uhura interrupted from her communications control station. "A message from Bavarya, Captain Kirk."

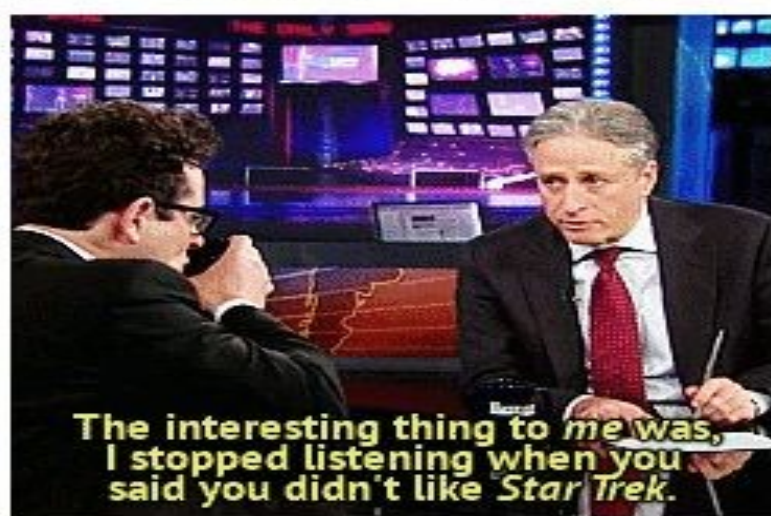
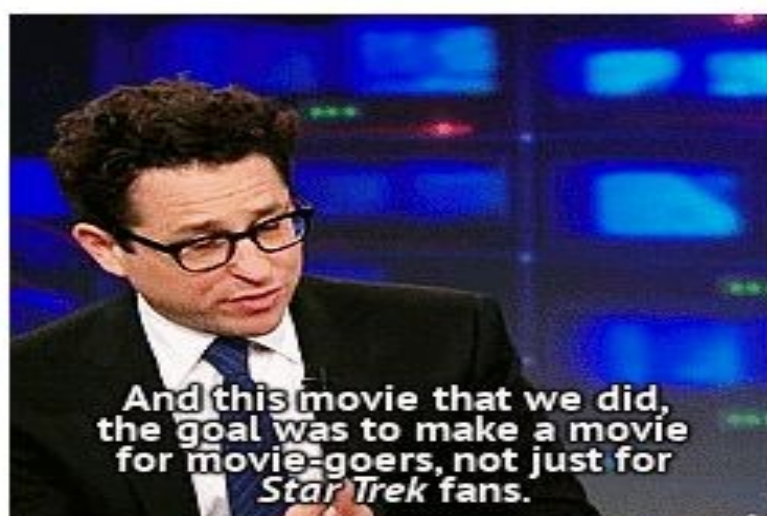
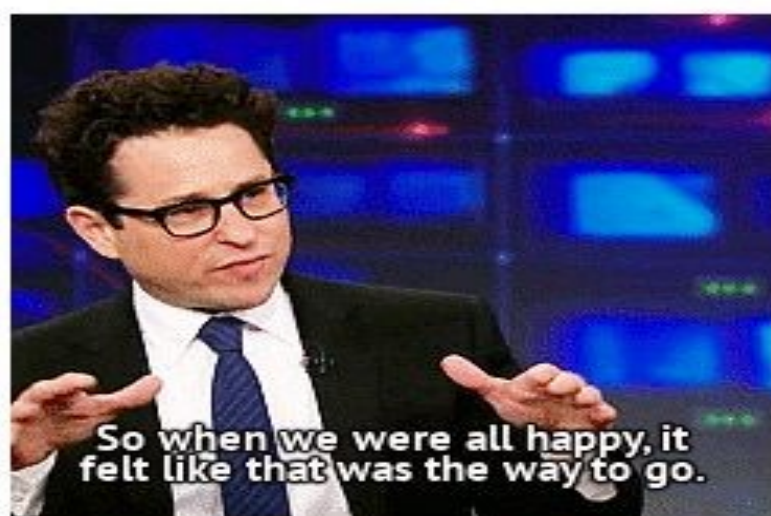
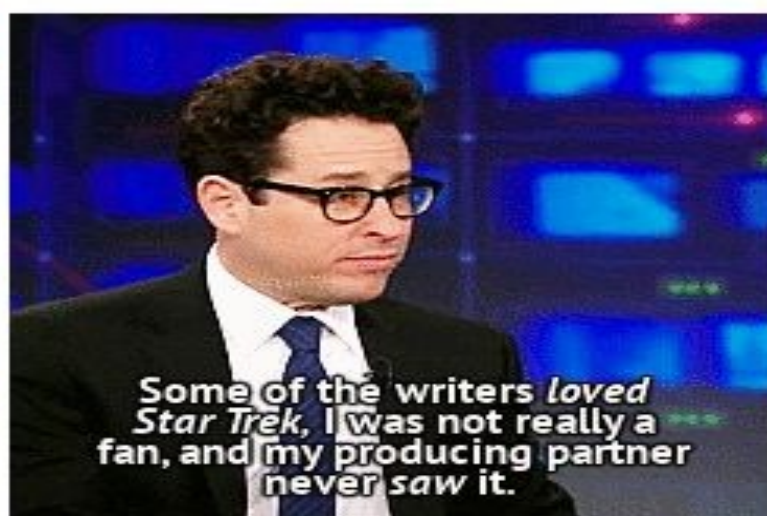
"Very well, Lieutenant, bring it in." He flicked a control and said, "Captain James Kirk of the United Federation of Planets Starship *Enterprise* here."

A voice they recognized as that of *Oberst* Muller barked abruptly, "His All Highest, Nummer Ein of Bavaryl"

"Another All Highest!" Sulu muttered disgustedly.

Fairly Odd TREK





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