

SubSpace Interference



Ship's Communications of the USS Rendezvous
Stardate:

Stardate: January 1999

From the Bridge...

Well the captain is out of town this week so you get the great honor and privilege of hearing from your humble first officer this month. I hope everyone had a great holiday season and that those who traveled were able to do so safely.

First of all, I want to thank all of those who helped to make our New Year's Eve party a success. We had fifteen people come and celebrate the new year. The food was great and so was the company. Everyone had fun playing games and watching 'Contact.' A special thank you to Vicki Wiser for supplying the prize of a free movie pass for the winner of the poker game.

With the new year comes the annual new year's resolutions. I've already made and broken my personal ones, but the one I plan on holding on to is to help make this the best year for the club yet. I know Captain Brindley has the same feelings.

Although the club is based around science fiction, I've always felt that the true heart of the club is the friendships that have formed from our coming together. I have many cherished memories of club activities and just hanging around with its members. My life has been changed in many ways by the people I've come into contact with during my time in the club.

I've seen others grow and mature. Remember short little Josh Walker? Well he's no longer short and he got married January 15th. Way to go, Josh. Congratulations and best wishes from your friends on the *Rendezvous*.

So here's to another great year aboard the *USS Rendezvous*. I'm looking forward to it and I hope you are too.

Commander Ross Trowbridge
Executive Officer
USS Rendezvous

Coming Events

February 6 Hansen Planetarium and Natural History Museum. Departure time to be announced, travel weather permitting. COST \$20.00. \$5.00 for carpool and \$15.00 for entrance fees.

March 27 Air Force Museum, weather permitting. Departure time to be announced. COST \$10.00

April 24 Spring Rocket Launch

May ?? CONDUIT 3-Day Convention in SLC. Prepare to party and have fun.

May 22 or 29 Hogle Zoo (new babies should be out.) COST \$20.00

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Plus more of Michael Goodwin's
monolith cartoons.

June 12 Willow Park Zoo Picnic. Inviting 7th fleet,
SCA anyone you want to have come. Day in the
park.

July ?? Star Trek Lagoon Day ??

Science Station

Happy New year and welcome to the first
edition of Science Station, your console of weather
and space facts. I hope you all enjoy it and learn quite a
bit from it.

Sincerely,

Derrick Hughes
Science Officer
USS Rendezvous

1998 was quite the year of weather events...
Wildfires in Florida ... Tornadoes in Tennessee ...

Hurricanes Bonnie, Georges, and especially Mitch who
caused almost Armageddon-like conditions in Central
America ... A nasty drought in Texas ... An ice storm
in the East ... A tornado that destroyed the town of
Spencer, South Dakota.

All this plus El Niño. Quite a year, isn't it? Well
that's all for now. Live Long and Prosper.

Rendezvous Saga

Captain's Log. Stardate 9901.12

*The Rendezvous has been ordered to the
Durango system to rendezvous with the USS Kelly.
Admiral Hollinger said he needs to meet with me
privately, but he wouldn't tell me what. With the
Dominion war only simmering at the moment, the
crew is looking forward to a little time away from the
front.*

Marla watched closely as the image of the *USS
Kelly* grew in the main viewscreen. She couldn't help
but be impressed by the large size of the 7th Fleet

Flagship. It's four warp nacelles gave it the appearance that it was ready to spring forward at a moment's notice.

Marla suppressed a smile. She was convinced that the only reason it had to be that big was to hold all the paper pushers required by Starfleet Command's bureaucratic 'red tape.'

"Incoming hail from the admiral, captain," announced Vicki Wiser from the communications console. "He's expecting you."

"Thanks, Vicki. Tell him we'll be beaming right over."

She turned to her first officer. "Mr. Trowbridge, you're with me. Matt, you have the Conn."

Ross stood up and followed her to the turbolift. As the doors closed, he turned to her. "Do you have any idea why we've been summoned?"

Marla shook her head. "Not a clue."

Walking through the corridors of the *Kelly* was always a strange experience for Marla. They were quite a bit larger than those of her own ship. She felt somehow exposed as she walked down the hallway. It was just too open. She decided that the *Kelly* reminded her of a cruise ship more than a warship. She smiled at the thought. A cruiseship, but with quite a punch.

They headed for the Admiral Hollinger's office on deck two. Both officers had been here several times for meetings and for when he had received his promotion from captain. A yeoman motioned for them to go straight into the admiral's office.

Admiral Hollinger was standing in front of a large viewport to the side of his office. The *Kelly's* hull stretched away into the distance.

Marla was surprised to find there was no one else in the room. Not even the *Kelly's* captain was present.

Dennis turned away from the viewport and motioned them towards two chairs. "Please sit down. I have some bad news."

Ross and Marla exchanged a quick, worried glance as they took their seats.

The admiral sat down behind his desk. "Just over a week ago, two Starfleet operatives investigating a major crime syndicate disappeared near the Epsilon Eridani system. These were very experienced agents and we can only suspect foul play. They must have been discovered."

Marla spoke up. "Admiral, I'm sorry to hear about our losses, but how does this affect us and the *Rendezvous*?"

Dennis took a deep breath and sighed. "Because you both knew these operatives. They were Stewart Hunsaker and Dalice Nilson, your former captain and executive officer. I'm sorry."

Ross and Marla sat in stunned silence. They had both been through many tight scrapes with Stew and Dalice. To imagine them being lost was very difficult. They were more than their senior officers, they were their friends.

The admiral waited a moment before continuing. "Marla, I want you to take the *Rendezvous* to the Epsilon Eridani system and find out what happened to them. They were almost ready to bring down the syndicate. We need the information they collected to complete our case... and we owe it to them to bring them back home. But remember, only the two of you know their real mission. To the rest of your crew, this is simply a rescue mission.

"I've already uploaded everything we have on their movement for the last month to the *Rendezvous*' memory banks. Unfortunately, we don't have all that much to go on. Are there any questions?"

Marla's head was spinning. Stew and Dalice dead? It just couldn't be. Then she realized that the admiral had asked her a question. "Huh? Oh, uh, no Sir. No Questions."

"Very well, then. Dismissed."

The two officers stood up and made their way back to the *Rendezvous*.

It took just under two days to reach the Epsilon Eridani system at warp 8. There were four planets around the single star. All were uninhabitable. The third planet had a few ancient ruins, but was now dead from a long ago war. As long range sensor sweeps revealed nothing, they headed towards the center of the system.

They began their search at the center of the system and began spiraling out. Their path brought them within close scanner range of all four planets, but there was no sign of life or any debris.

They continued circling until they passed through the Oort Cloud surrounding the system. The small meteors and the occasional comet made scanning more difficult.

"Mr .Baum," said Marla from the command chair. "Plot us a course along the edge of the Oort cloud. I want to see what's there."

"Aye, sir. Course plotted."

They had followed the cloud for less than an hour when Derrick spoke up.

"Captain !I'm picking up some sort of hyperspatial rift just inside the cloud. Energy readings are all over the place."

Marla sat up in her chair. Finally! Something they could check out. "Bring us closer, Michael. But not too close. I really don't want to see it from the inside."

"Excuse me, captain," said Vicki from the communications panel. "I'm picking up a distress call. It's very faint, but it appears to be coming from the rift."

"Let's hear it, Lieutenant."

The speakers around the bridge crackled to life."... *need assistance. Repeat. This is Stewart Hunsaker of the S.S. Baldur's Gate. We've been pulled into a space anomaly of some kind. Our*

engines are off line and cannot be repaired. We can't get out on our own and need assistance. Repeat. This is Stewart Hun..."

"Turn it off, Vicki. It's obviously a recorded message. The only question is whether the captain is still alive or not. Bring us in a little closer, Michael."

A bright blue vortex of light slowly grew larger in the main viewscreen as they pulled closer to the rift. They saw a couple of the meteors drifting near the vortex change direction suddenly and shoot through the center of the rift.

Derrick stood up from his station. "Sensors are useless. All I can pick up is the energy around the vortex. I couldn't tell you if the whole Dominion fleet were on the other side."

Marla turned to her communications officer. "Vicki, is the distress call still there?"

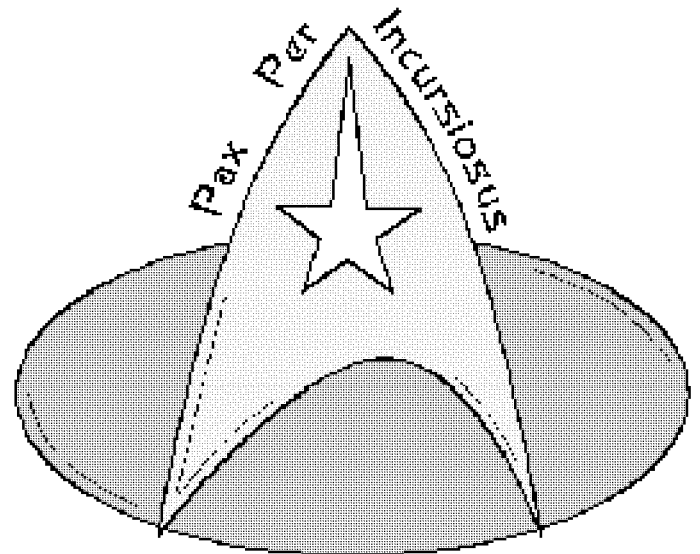
"Yes, captain. It's coming from the rift. But it's bouncing around so much in the vortex that I can't get a definite bearing."

Ross leaned over to Marla. "It's your call, captain. Do we go in?"

"Yes, commander. We go in. Matt, drop a navigational beacon containing the ship's log. Mr. Baum, as soon as that's done take us in nice and slow."

Moments later, the starship began to ease towards the rift. As it did so, it began to pick up speed.

Marla became alarmed. "Michael, I said take it slow."



U.S.S. RENDEZVOUS
NCC-1898

Michael's hands danced over his control panel. "I'm trying to captain, but it's pulling us in. I'm firing full retro thrusters, but there's no slowing us down. It's like being sucked down a drain."

The captain tapped a button on the arm of her command chair. "All hands! This is the captain. Brace for impact!"

The *Rendezvous* continued to pick up speed as it neared the vortex. Time seemed to stand still for just a moment as the ship passed the outer edge, then the ship shot forward into the rift's center.

Marla gave a start. Instead of the familiar star field in the viewscreen, it was now filled with a red glow. Shapes swirled in the fog, but there was no way to tell what was real and what was illusion. "Matt, give me an aft view. I want to see the rift."

The viewscreen changed slightly. In the center of the swirling red colors was the rift. But it appeared as if it were a long ways away.

She turned to her science officer. "Derrick, are we really that far away from it?"

"Negative, captain. When we passed through the rift, the energy we were expending seemed to cause the rift to partially collapse. It's now only 25 meters across."

Matt looked stricken. "That's not big enough to let us out."

Marla walked over and patted him on the shoulder. "Then we'll either have to make it bigger or find another way out. Either way, we'll make it back."

She turned to Vicki. "Lieutenant, can you still pick up our beacon?"

"Yes, but it's faint. I'm also still reading captain Hunsaker's distress signal. I'm patching the bearing through to navigation now."

"Got it." announced Michael.

"That's good, Mr. Baum. Lay in a course. Mr. Hughes, what is the status of the rift?"

Derrick glanced at his monitors. "The rift is still there." He paused for a moment.

"Captain, it's a little larger than my first reading!" He tapped furiously at his console. "If it continues to expand at this rate, it will be big enough to let us out in just over a day."

Marla smiled. "Thank you, Mr. Hughes. That's good news."

She turned to her Op's officer. "See, Matt? I told you we'd get back. Now let's go find us a couple of castaways. Mr. Baum, lay in a course for the *Baldur's Gate*. Engage!"

Even at full impulse, it took almost six hours for the *Rendezvous* to reach the *Baldur's Gate*. As they approached, they tried to raise the stricken ship, but there was no response. They still hadn't had any luck when the two ships came within visual range.

"That's it?" exclaimed Reed as he walked onto the bridge. "It's a hunk of junk!"

The small ship on their viewscreen looked to be at least fifty years old. What once might have been a smooth surface was dented and burned from who knows how many atmospheric entries. The ship looked like it could barely hold together, yet alone move.

"Derrick?" asked Marla. "Are you picking up any life signs?"

He glanced at his display. "Affirmative, captain. Two life forms, both humanoid."

Marla was ecstatic. "Derrick, can we beam them on board?"

"I wouldn't risk it. Hyperspace is filled with so many eddy currents and energy fluctuations, the chances of getting them on board are pretty slim."

She turned to Matt. “Mr. Chism. Activate the tractor beam. They should fit in hangar bay 1 without any problem. Ross and Reed, you’re with me. Matt, you have the bridge. We’ll be in the hangar bay.”

The old ship was just passing through the hangar bay doors as they entered through the door. If anything. It was worse looking up close. “Set it down gently, Matt,” Marla caught herself mumbling as they watched it come to a halt.

A door opened on the side and two figures emerged. They were instantly recognizable as Stewart and Dalice. There were hugs all around as the old friends were reunited.

“Boy are we glad to see you,” said Stew. “We knew we couldn’t receive a transmission and weren’t too sure about our transmitter. The first we knew you were here is when you hit us with the tractor beam. We didn’t have a clue who it was until I could get to a viewport. I couldn’t believe it when I saw your port warp nacelle. I even recognized the dent!”

Marla laughed. “I have to admit it. When you get into trouble, you REALLY get into trouble. Who else would come up with getting lost in hyperspace?”

“It’s not like we planned it or anything,” said Dalice. We were cutting through the Epsilon system to get back to Starfleet Command with the evidence we were gathering. We detected the rift and decided to take a closer look. Too close as it turned out. It grabbed us and pulled us in. We lost half our systems from the gravitational pull, including all our engines. It took us two days just to get emergency power up and running so we could get off battery power.”

Marla shook her head. “It sounds like you two have been through quite an ordeal. Let’s get you to sickbay and get you checked out.”

They were walking out of the hangar bay when the ship’s PA system kicked on. It was Matt’s voice. “All hands, yellow alert. Captain Brindley to the bridge.”

“Reed,” said Marla. “Will you escort these two to sickbay. We’re needed on the bridge.” She turned to Stew and Dalice. “If you’ll excuse us...”

Stew smiled. “Of course, captain. I’ve made a few mad dashes to the bridge for an alert myself. We’ll see you later.”

With that, Marla and Ross left them in the hallway.

“What’s up, Matt?” asked Marla as she exited the turbolift.

Matt turned to her. “We’ve picked up two small ships moving quickly through this area. They’re following some sort of navigational beam we would have never detected if we hadn’t been scanning them.”

“Have they detected us?” she inquired.

“We don’t think so. They haven’t changed their speed or course since we’ve been watching them.”

“That’s good,” she replied. “Activate the cloaking device. Let’s follow them and see where they’re headed.”

The ship quickly faded from view.

As the Rendezvous followed, it picked up occasional messages between the two unknown vessels. To their surprise, the conversations were in English. One of them even had a British accent. They appeared to be on a military patrol of some sort, using call signs of Whitestar 26 and Whitestar 74. They were planning to make some sort of ‘jump’ to normal space in less than half an hour.

About fifteen minutes into the chase, Dalice and Stew arrived on the bridge. Out of habit, Marla almost got up and let him have the command chair.

“What’s going on?” asked Stew.

“We’ve detected two ships flying through hyperspace,” answered Ross. “We’ve just about closed to visual range to see what they are. We’ve avoided performing any scans to avoid detection.”

Marla turned to the Ops station. “How about it, Matt? Can we see them yet?”

“We should be close enough now. Maximum magnification on screen now.”

Two small ships in close formation appeared on the viewscreen. Their coloring was a mottled blue and gray and they had a slightly organic look to them.

“They look like plucked chickens!” exclaimed Dalice.

“They kind of do, don’t they?” agreed Marla. “But they’re kind of cool looking, too. Michael, bring us in close. I want to be right with them when they make this ‘jump’ to normal space. I’m hoping we can ‘jump’ with them when they go.”

It took the *Rendezvous* another five minutes to catch the other ships. The federation vessel pulled in just under the trailing ship. They followed for several more minutes.

Derrick continued monitoring his sensors. “Captain. I’m picking up a power surge from the lead vessel. It’s focused on a point about 50 kilometers in front of us. There’s a rift forming! It’s larger than the one we came in through. There’s plenty of room for all three ships.”

On screen, a yellow vortex began appearing. It quickly grew larger. Soon, several stars could be seen through its center.”

“Michael,” said Marla. “Follow them through as closely as possible. I don’t want that vortex closing on us.”

The three ships flew the vortex and entered normal space. The two unidentified ships turned and headed towards a nearby planet.

Marla ordered the *Rendezvous* to come to a stop. “Derrick, I want to know where we’re at as soon as possible. Matt what do you make of that planet?”

Matt spent a moment checking his console. “It’s a type ‘M’ planet. I’m not picking up any signs of intelligent life on the planet, but there’s a small orbital platform around the planet’s moon. The two ships are heading there.”

“Mr. Baum, follow them at a discreet distance. I’m curious about what they’re up to. Derrick, do you have our location yet?”

Derrick looked like he didn’t really want to answer the question. “I think so, sir.”

“I think so? What kind of an answer is that?”

Derrick looked a little uncomfortable. “Nothing matches up with the star charts. They’re close, but everything is off just a little.” He paused. “Wait a minute. Let me try something.”

He ran his fingers across his console, then a satisfied look came across his face. “I thought so. Captain, we’ve gone back in time almost a hundred years. It’s somewhere around 2260 AD Earth years. We’re near Barnard’s Star.”

Marla looked surprised. “2260? But that was federation space even then. We would have known about these ships. And there never was a station here. We still use this area for wargames. Just what is going on here?”

“Captain,” said Derrick. “I’m picking up another ship entering the area. It just suddenly phased in... Must have been cloaked. It’s moving towards the other two ships.”

Suddenly, Dalice dropped to her knees. She screamed out in pain. “It’s in my head. I can hear it. It’s got to be stopped!”

Stew dropped down beside her and took her by the shoulders. “What’s got to be stopped, Dalice? What is it?”

“I don’t know,” she gasped. “It’s like a huge shadow reaching across my mind. I just know that it’s evil and must be stopped.” She let out another cry.

Marla turned to face the front and hit the P.A. button on her command chair. “All hands. RED Alert. This is not a drill.”

She turned to Matt. “Can we get a look at the new ship?”

“On screen now,” he replied.

A dark menacing shape appeared on the main viewscreen. It had what appeared to be many legs emanating from a central mass. It was hard to see against the blackness of space.

“Mr. Chism. Turn off the cloaking device. Reed, raise shields and arm all weapons. Michael, take us in.”

To be continued...