

Scott Bakula Interview

Journalists Have an Audience with Bakula,

During his lunch break while filming a recent episode of Enterprise, Scott Bakula, sat down with invited journalists and discussed his new ascension to the Captain's chair.

Question: How does it feel to sit in the captain's chair?

Scott Bakula: It feels great! The first day, I kind of got this vibe that people were kind of waiting for me to sit in the chair, you know - a lot of people milling around, not working. And, of course, being the person I am, for a long time I didn't sit. [Laughs] I made everybody wait. But it feels great and then they could go back to work.

My character spends more time moving around the bridge than sitting in that chair. I want to be over here and see what the communications officer's doing, and then right behind the navigator. Real hands on. Not a regal kind of a thing at all, to me.

Q: From the time you were approached about doing the show, till now, how has your character changed?

Brannon [Braga] and Rick [Berman] were really great about setting this character up and explaining him and selling him to me. They pretty much delivered on that. That doesn't always happen. Sometimes you'll be told, "Well it's going to be this, this, and this." Then you get to the page and it's not there at all and then you're forced to find it.

But they've done a good job of making him dynamic, interesting, and giving him a lot of room to grow which means - when you're faced with a series that's going to run for a while, hopefully - you're not stuck in a corner somewhere with a character you're trying to invent fun things for him to do.

Q: What did they say to you that sold you on the character?

SB: They talked about going back to a feeling of the Kirk/Spock/Bones relationship - more about the relationship between the crew, the captain, and his officers as opposed to a relationship to the universe. And that, right away, was very appealing to me - a human approach in terms of the emotional and volatile relationships and things going on onboard the ship that the captain's not always happy about.

This guy is a Starfleet brat - he grew up in the system, his dad was part of the whole thing - and he's fulfilling this lifelong dream to captain a starship. And, then - being the first one to go out. All of these things were very appealing to me - being an avid

fan of the original Star Trek series. And to get an opportunity to go before [the original Star Trek] was a big carrot - a good one to put out in front of me.

Q: You were always a Star Trek fan when you were growing up?

SB: Yes.

Q: What is it about the original show that appealed to you?

SB: Well, I loved the relationship that those folks had - especially the three guys. I thought there was a lot of humor. We all kind of smiled about the effects back then. The other day somebody asked me about a ... is it a Gorn? I hadn't thought about him in a long time, but oh my gosh it was just so terrible. But they treated it so seriously - I love that whole thing.

I think - and this is more Rick talking - I think there's an optimistic nature to the series that's appealing. It's about us getting it right, and then moving on. And again, I think those three characters just jumped out. And, at the time there wasn't anything like [Star Trek] - Star Wars didn't come till '77, something like that? - so they had that area to themselves pretty much. I know there were others - The Invaders, stuff like that [Laughs].

Q: You mentioned the Kirk/Spock/McCoy dynamic, what is the big dynamic for the Captain so far in this show?

SB: The big dynamic is that I have a female Vulcan science officer. My character is not fond of Vulcans and never has been. We're at cross-purposes a lot. Also the captain is a pretty emotional fellow and her rational approach really bugs me.

Q: Do you have a sense, so far, of how the relationship with the Vulcan woman will work out?

SB: I'm trying! She's the same. They just don't change, those Vulcans! Her character actually has changed a little bit so far, in her desire to help out and not totally be a stick in the mud. We're trying to acknowledge that she's at times helpful. She's talented at what she does. She's a talented science officer. Am I hanging out with her? No.

It's an interesting question, I think about it a lot, because the great thing about Spock was that he had this half-human side of him that you could relate to - you could hang out with a little bit. And she doesn't. I don't know how that will play out.

Q: You signed on a Thursday and started shooting on Monday? Take us through that.

SB: I sat with [executive producers] Rick [Berman] and Brannon [Braga] on Thursday morning, then came into this room [in the Paramount Commissary] and we had lunch with the cast and a read-through. And then went away and rehearsed two or three



scenes that day - that we knew we were going to shoot on Monday. Then I had fittings with Bob [Blackman]. Came back Friday and rehearsed three or four hours, and more fittings. And went away for the weekend. No weekend work at all - hit it Monday running.

Q: How was it to meet the cast for the first time? First impressions?
SB: Everybody's very different in the cast. Which is great. You look around to see, just to get a sense of who's going to be what kind of person. Ultimately, when you're doing a series for a long time, that comes into the show so much. You've got a Vulcan - who's not half-human, she's Vulcan - so she's limited in a lot of things; and you've got this other doctor guy we don't know what he is yet - so you're just trying to get a sense of who these people are. I know what the hours are, and you live with them for a good portion of your life. The vibe from the very beginning is very good. There's just a great energy there; everybody's been extremely enthusiastic about being here, extremely enthusiastic about the show and the work. And they did a really good job of casting; it's an excellent cast.

Q: What was your biggest surprise during the first few days?
SB: Just how hard it was. The language was so hard, and so precise. It's not technobabble, but they are very concerned that what they've written on the page gets played back, and that's always an adjustment to make. I've done a lot of different work where it's not as precise as that.

I've done a lot of special effects work, so I know what that's like. But you're in that Bridge and you're looking at that empty black screen and you're hoping that the special effects guys are really good! [Laughs] "Tell me again, now, what is that helix going to look like, and how big is it going to be? And how are the pieces going to break off?" And I've done that, but you're there doing seven pages of four different scenes on the Bridge, and usually I'm driving those scenes. So there's a lot of "around the horn" stuff going on and it's difficult work. And of course the trick is to make it not look difficult.

Q: Since you've had experience with special effects and blue screens, do you give advice to actors who do not?
SB: No. There are so many people there. The people who are going to create the effect are always there to describe what it will look like. The directors are not new to the franchise and are versed in talking about it. I'm learning a lot. It's a talented group.

Q: How many episodes have you filmed so far?
SB: We're in the middle of hour six. The pilot is two [hours], so this would be our fourth episode.

Q: Since you're past the pilot stage, have you started developing a synergy with the writers about your character?
SB: Rick and Brannon are incredibly available, which is really nice. I can pick up the phone and say, "It's a great script: I have two issues I don't understand - I don't get this," or "I don't think that I would do this." I'm at a point where I can say that, "It doesn't seem to me that this is where we want the captain's character to go, yet." And they are fantastic.

Q: Just to set the universe, you have starships, but they've been limited?
SB: We're going on a mission - but I refuse to say too much about the pilot. What's limited us is our warp capacity. We've been working on this engine, which my father's been working on in conjunction with the Vulcans for a good 50 years, and we're finally able to achieve a warp speed that will allow us to really travel. So for instance, Travis Mayweather, he's my navigator, is a "Space

Boomer" - he's grown up on cargo ships. He's got a line about, "... in the third, fourth, and fifth grade I was on my way somewhere." So, it's more about finally having the capacity to get out there and go into entirely different solar systems.

So we're a hundred years before Kirk and Spock. There's no Federation. No rules. That's, again, what was kind of exciting about it. It's the Wild West. And there's nobody out there to complain to. So you have to find your own way out there. My character and the ship, we're taking Earth into the universe. How we do that and how we present ourselves, the mistakes that we're going to make - he's a very fallible kind of captain - makes it really exciting.

Q: You don't have a Prime Directive?

SB: No. There's no Federation.

Q: Would you say this Star Trek has a looser feeling - more humor - and that you represent the "common man"?

SB: Comedy is a tricky thing. We think we are achieving a level of humor and hope that people find that.

We were saying, yesterday on the set, that 150 years from today is not very far. We were talking about what companies would still be around. We were out on location and LeVar Burton is directing this week and he had on this Eddie Bauer getup from head to toe. And we said to him, "You know what? Eddie Bauer will be around in 150 years." Then someone says, "Hey, what about LL Bean?" [Laughs] You can kind of get your mind around 150 years from today. There are some things that you say definitely will not be here in 150 years - when you start to think about it.

My character is very much a part of the space program, very much part of that world - but the feeling of the show is, We're the first guys. We're the first people to go and see what's behind that moon over there. And we're the first to go out and see a dead ship in front of us and there are no life forms on it - what should we do? That's the kind of excitement and fear and uncertainty that comes up [on the show] that I think we can relate to more than, "Oh yes, look at that. Well, you know, let's pass that one by." There's a very human grounding to the series, and casualness, and different clothes. We get dirty and bleed.

Q: How physical is this role? Kirk always seemed to get in a fist fight?

SB: I just heard that I get my ass kicked in the next episode, actually! It's pretty physical. And they're enjoying writing to that. The pilot was very physical. But it's a very physical cast; everyone's very able to get up and go. There's kind of an open opportunity to do a lot of things.

Q: What about the uniforms? The other actors complained about getting in and out of them.

SB: We have uniforms, but we're not in any spandex! They're like jumpsuits. They're made out of cotton and they've been through the wash a few times, so they're a little bit worn. The producers spent a lot of time with the submarine people - they have the feel of what it might be like. We have pockets! [Jonathan] Frakes showed up for a visit and he said, "You know, we would have killed for a suit like that - you've got a zipper and a pocket! And we had to be strapped in and everything!" Sorry, Jonathan! [Laughs]

Q: There are seven regulars, but how large is the overall crew?

SB: Seventy. Very small. The idea is that it's much more like a submarine. The ship is smaller than Kirk's - you're bumping your

head on stuff. There's a great feel to it; it isn't cramped, but you're definitely in a small ship.

Q: How does playing in that smaller set form your character? It's not like the other, larger Star Trek sets.

SB: I'm still in awe of the sets, period. I just can't believe that anybody gets to build sets like this. But they explained to me, "Well, we get to depreciate them for six years, or whatever." They're amazing. Amazing.

We walked into the armory set - we hadn't had it for the pilot - and it was this unbelievably great set. These torpedo tubes that worked! It's phenomenal. So the set is still more than I ever thought it would be. And, again, I don't have a relationship with being on a Star Trek set before. I never saw the other ones, or felt what they felt like. This feels great. It feels cozy. There is plenty of room to move around. It's not expansive, but it's closer and more connected - two steps and I'm standing right here - he's right here, she's right there.

Q: Do you have portholes to see the stars streaming by?

SB: Yes. We have windows and have star fields and we drop out of warp and have impulse power and those kinds of things. I haven't seen a show yet, so I don't know what it looks like.

All the design units and all the teams are getting to do everything from the beginning - so they are getting to say, what do the shots, the bullets (which are not bullets) that come out of our phase pistols look like? They get to make everything different again. How [the stars] look outside our windows, I assume, will be different; but I don't know.

Q: Do you have replicators?

SB: No. I have a great Captain's Dining Room, which we've just been shooting in today. We have great food. We just ate Chinese with cool chopsticks.

Q: Will you be showing "firsts," like the first beaming down?

SB: There are elements in the pilot and in the first couple episodes, that will be fun for Star Trek fans because you'll see the genesis of the things that we've all come to know and expect that we immediately relate to as "This is what Star Trek is." But, we don't have them yet - we're working on them. We don't have phasers, we don't have photon torpedoes - we are before that. It's going to be new stuff, it's great for everybody.

Q: Is there anything that this show will be avoiding because they were done already in previous Star Trek series?

SB: All bets are off because we're ahead of everybody else. The mantra has become, "We've never done this before." If someone says, "This is how such-and-such works." Someone else asks, "How do you know that?" "Well, because we did it in -" "Oh, no ... we didn't do this before, it's never been done before. So wipe the slate clean. There are no rules, there are no Federation rules, we're going to make our own mistakes and we're going to make our own things."

The biggest arguments are about, "Well, which button do you push now to make this open and this close?" and "Which opens the comm?" That kind of stuff. "Well, on Voyager -" "Nope, don't tell me what you did on Voyager." We're buttons and switches - the ship's hands-on now. Things slide and pull and push, and we're not talking to the turbolift.

Q: Is LeVar Burton the first Star Trek actor to direct?

SB: Yes. He's a great director and a great guy. It's nice having him there. He's certainly familiar with what it's like to start up, and what that energy's like in creating the relationships. And again, more than anything in terms of guidance when you start a show,

it's how you find those little places and let everyone have their own voice. He's wonderful that way. Haven't worked with Roxann [Dawson] yet. Haven't seen Frakes on the list yet.

Q: Have you talked to any of the previous captains?

SB: No. Jonathan Frakes came by to visit. And Brent [Spiner].

Q: What do you say when it's time to go? [i.e. "Engage"]

SB: We haven't got that. I don't have a handle yet. The best handle I've had so far is, "Let's go." [Laughs] Which, again, informs you of the character.

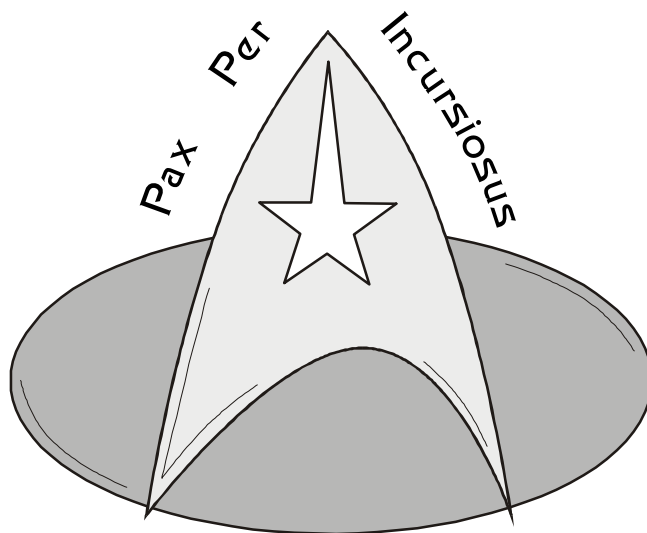
Q: Have you developed anything that might be a trademark gesture or line - ?

SB: No. I've been down this road enough times - you look for things. And obviously the chore is to not make it appear studied or forced, but you look to create things. I know that I'm being watched, very carefully to say the least, and I know from doing Quantum [Leap] that your moves and your process is oftentimes poured over. So you want to make sure that you don't get yourself into any corners you can't get out of. At the same time, I love the game - the creative give and take with the fans - because I like giving little pieces and little stuff - [so they wonder] "Why did he do that? What is that all about?" And I know what's down the road, what's coming in this kind of a series. You get to enjoy that relationship, so it's fun.

But [my contributions can be] as mundane as asking, "What are we going to put on the walls in my room? And what does this guy do? And what things did he do in his past that we can bring on the trip?" And since the trip isn't planned, it's not like the captain had a designer come in and do the quarters. It's kind of a hodgepodge, and we're gone. Of course, things can be sent to us and we can add as we go along.

Q: So far, what aliens have you met? Any we might be familiar with?

SB: It's pretty common knowledge that the Klingons are around. I've certainly stood toe-to-toe with a Klingon screaming and spitting in my face with a knife to my throat - that was pretty great. We know about the Vulcans. Everybody else is brand new - so far.



U.S.S. RENDEZVOUS
NCC-1896



Q: Is it permissible, in the 22nd Century, to say things like, "I don't like this entire species?"

SB: Well I say some pretty harsh things in the pilot about Vulcans and to a Vulcan's face. But what's great about this character is that he has a place to go. He has some preconceived notions that are not all pretty.

Q: Is there a back story of why you feel that way?

SB: Yes. It's in the pilot. The pilot is very grounded on Earth so there's a great sense of where he comes from, his history, and why he feels the way he feels about them.

Q: Are the episodes self-contained, so far, or is there an overall arc?

SB: There is an overall arc. I don't know what that overall arc is, but I know it is there. From the pilot you'll see that there is a definite overall future - arc isn't the right word - but you'll wonder about the overall future early on. I don't know when we get back to that story, but I know that we are going back and that there's a bigger plan out there that the guys on our little ship know nothing about. Which, again, is nice that I also don't know about so I can just play it as real as I can.

In terms of [the episodes being] self-contained, I guess so. Right now they all have the theme of figuring out what works, how to approach ships, how to make first contact - "Whoops, they're shooting at us - that wasn't the way to do it! I know how to get out of this one!" That's the common thread. And each of the seven members of the crew are having their own experiences with being out in space all of a sudden and coming up against aliens and different things.

Q: What is your relationship to the Doctor?

SB: The Doctor is also non-human. I couldn't tell you what he is yet because I don't know! [Laughs] But he is a wonderful character that John Billingsley's created. The Doctor's so much fun and so much about his work and how much fun it is to be doing all this stuff. He's just kind of a light-hearted, carefree guy. He'll say things right out of left field, almost non-sequitur-ish. So we have a very new relationship. He is not a person known to me before we take off. So we are just kind of finding him. But he's wonderfully gifted and a bit of a mad scientist.

Q: Are there any sequences where the characters disguise themselves as aliens to go undercover?

SB: I hope that's a ways away. We really are so early into it and there's so much fun to be had first. The ship doesn't work well, so we have problems. We weren't really supposed to be going out yet, so we have all those things that don't work. "So, let's try target practice and see what that's like! Oh, that doesn't work - we can't hit anything!" You know, that kind of stuff is going on. You don't

want to get into the really tricky fancy stuff that to me, is like Year 3 / Year 4 kind of shows - where we're looking for something to keep everyone excited. We've got stuff. And we also have the mundane - which is great fun. There's a squeak in the floor of my cabin and it keeps bugging the hell out of me. Just stuff that, again, is different than what Star Trek has been in the past, but it's all still in a nice package and it's fun.

Q: Are you prepared to do the inevitable "taken over by alien forces" acting?

SB: Well, I don't think it could be worse than being pregnant, [Laughs] so I think I can handle it. Again, I hope it doesn't happen for a goodly fifty episodes from now.

Q: What about romance for your character?

SB: In the pilot. Twisted romance, but it's good. I think it's going to be a pretty sexy show. There's some interesting stuff that's happened in the first six hours. Definitely some sexuality in this thing. Which is really good.

Q: Will James Cromwell do a small part?

SB: Uh. He's a sly fellow. You won't hear it from me.

Q: Have you played a lot of leadership roles before and is there something different about a character in a leadership position and one that is not in control?

SB: Leadership roles, to me, are the most fun. The reason I got into this business in the beginning was that I liked the interaction with the other actors - that kind of camaraderie. I played a lot of sports growing up, I enjoyed team sports the most, probably because there's that sense of everybody being in it together. I'm corny that way, I guess, but it's nice to see if you can create that group dynamic. That's very special - and you see it in all the successful shows, a show like West Wing, or Law and Order - the shows where you have the sense of a group of people with one goal and they're all working together. They're all different, and they've all got problems, but there's that great energy that gets created. I'm drawn to that if the opportunity presents itself.

The approach isn't any different - whether you're one guy time traveling, or the captain of a ship - in terms of trying to get to the reality of the work. But I certainly enjoy it, and if I were to fantasize about "If I weren't an actor," I would probably be somebody who worked with a lot of people in some kind of a team thing. And as an actor that's what we do - you're with a crew of forty, fifty people and you have a common goal every day. That's the joy of doing this kind of work, for me - "Can we create this? Can we make this magic with everybody together?"

Q: How far in advance do you get the scripts? Do you have trouble learning the Star Trek words?

SB: Yes. I can't remember any of the words right now. I'm blanking now. It varies. One script we got a week ahead of time. Another a day and a half.

Q: Is there anything about this experience we haven't asked about that we should know about?

SB: We've just been having a really great time, and I'm not sure that I was expecting it to be as much fun right off the bat as it has been. I think there are a couple reasons for that but I think their choice to make it a prequel, setting it back in time, was a great one because everybody's excited.

A lot of the crew guys, some of them have been here from Next Generation, and I was somewhat concerned, showing up, that it was going to be somewhat of a point-and-shoot deal - that the crew would be "Oh, yeah, well, whatever."

But they're excited about it and they're a great barometer in terms of their excitement for the show - because I can't compare it to Next Generation, or Deep Space Nine, or Voyager. I just know we are doing our work. But they are saying this is really great and really different and really exciting. All the department heads and their staff are having so much fun creating new looks and new ideas. There is a really wonderful energy that's holding the whole thing up, and together. It's fun.

Q: The season is young, but do have any projects planned for your hiatus?

SB: Don't have a clue at this point. I know how I felt during other hiatuses - is there a plural to hiatus? Hiattii? Sounds like an island, doesn't it? You know, Quantum was always like a marathon and you just tried to get to the end of it standing. I'm not sure how this is going to be. I've had much more time off already than I had in four and a half years on Quantum. So, I don't know how I'm going to feel.

The doors are open, my production company is still moving ahead. My agency is proceeding like I'm available for work, but at this point in time it's hard to get a sense of it. We're also doing 26 hours this year. I've only done 22 - that extra month is a lot. And we're not going to have as much of a break. I had a week off between the pilot and start of production.

Q: Is the reason you've had more time off due to having seven regulars?

SB: Yes, it's a big difference. And also, my other regular on Quantum - I was the only actor to work with him. So I didn't get a lot of relief from Dean [Stockwell], you know? Which he was delighted about. I was the only one who could see him - with the

exception of a couple of episodes. Even then I didn't get a break from him - he's still there.

Q: Have you heard from Dean since you got the role?

SB: No. He called me on Father's Day, but we missed. I have not talked to him. But wouldn't that be great if we could get him on [as a guest on Enterprise]? It has to be; we've got to do it. But put him in a big mask so he can be miserable for once! [Laughs]

Q: Are they telling you to avoid anything? Like, don't say, "Oh boy."

SB: They haven't written it on the page, and I won't be ad-libbing it! [Laughs] No, I'm not avoiding anything. Certainly, if we got to a place where Dean was a part of a show, that would be walking a very thin line if he was a guest. But no, there's no directive about, "Scott don't do this" and I'm not really watching myself. Look, a lot of Sam Beckett was a part of me, and a lot of this captain is a part of me - I haven't split off personalities between then and now. There will be similarities. I'm just older.

Q: Do you want to direct, as you did during Quantum, or pursue your musical side?

SB: I'll see how I feel at the end of the season. I get opportunities to do theatre all the time and now I'll have a ten-week window to do something like that. The question is the energy, and where you want to spend those ten weeks.

Certainly the directing thing is fun and I always like to do it. I'm not going to do any here this year; I just want to focus on the show and my work in it and the relationships. Rick and Brannon are great about letting their actors direct at times. As much as I've done series work before, Enterprise is kind of a new thing because Quantum was so overwhelming in terms of my time. This may give me the opportunities to do more things outside of it.

Q: Do you or the rest of the cast have game plans for conventions or web chats?

SB: I don't have a plan. I can't speak for the other folks. The work has been fairly heavy so far and my thing is, "if the show is no good nobody's going to care about any of the other stuff." So my goal right now is to give everything I can to each episode and really get the show off to a great start and promote that. Let everybody get their feet underneath them. Then we'll see where everything else takes us. But again, I want to deliver a great show and, hopefully, a great captain and continue the tradition.

Q: Can you introduce yourself to Star Trek fans, and the audience at large, who may not know you as well as Quantum Leap fans?

SB: I'm a guy who comes out of the theatre and stage. I grew up in St. Louis and went to New York, spent years there and touring



around the country, learning a lot. Studying in New York. Lots of musical theatre, predominantly my first love. Came to Los Angeles in 1986; did a musical out here. Did the pilot of *Designing Women*. My first show, called *Gung Ho*, was here at Paramount. Then I did a series called *Eisenhower & Lutz* for CBS that lasted 13 episodes, I guess. Then went back to New York in 1988 to do a Broadway show during the writer's strike - I was very lucky. And I came back from there and landed *Quantum*. I think most people know me from then on.

For people who don't know me, I would just say that I'm a stage actor who's tried my whole career to do as many different kinds of roles as I possible can, and try not to be limited in terms of one specific type. It's just the nature of where I come from in stage to avoid being pigeonholed. That's worked to my advantage at times and to my disadvantage at times.

Q: What do you do during your down time?

SB: I have my family, so I spend most of my down time with them, my kids. I used to like to go to the movies but don't seem to get there very often anymore. I love to go to the beach and still play a lot of sports, love to run and work out. My kids are aged 2, 5, 10 and 17 - and that probably says it all. [Laughs]

Q: Do you still play ice hockey anymore, or are you allowed to?

SB: If I were to play ice hockey any more, I would not tell them!
[Laughs]

Rendezvous Saga

Captain's Log, Stardate 0109.13

The Rendezvous has been docked at Starbase 124 for the last three days. Our hangar bay has been modified to function as stock pens. We will be carrying a variety of livestock to the planet Liberty 7. The planet is being colonized by a group that wishes to be totally self-sufficient without the use of technology.

They are an interesting people and I look forward to spending time with them. Their collection of animals is amazing, though I don't think all of my crew feels the same way.

Captain Marla Trowbridge strolled through hangar bay 1 of her ship, the *Rendezvous*. She had been here many times, but this time was different. Instead of a line of shuttles and sleek fighters, there were now synthetic wood pens spread throughout the bay. Earth animals... cattle, horses, sheep, pigs, and goats were grouped together. Cages along one wall contained chickens, geese, and rabbits. A young man was throwing hay to the cattle while another man cleaned the makeshift stalls.

All told, there were over three hundred animals and nearly seventy-five settlers on board the *Rendezvous*. Marla couldn't help but notice that the ship's air circulation was having difficulty keeping up with the smell. Having spent her youth with animals and then serving in Starfleet in the science section, this was a smell she was used to. In fact, it reminded her of her childhood home on earth.

She smiled as she made her way to hangar bay 2. She was looking for Lorraine and Charlie Taylor, the leaders of the settlers. Marla had spent time with the Taylors while working in Sciences. She spent more than a year on detached duty working

with them. She found them next to several stalls containing draft horses. Charlie was working on some leather straps of some sort.

Marla began stroking one of the horses as she arrived. It was a golden color with a light mane and tail.

"It's a Belgian," explained Lorraine.

Marla laughed. "I know. I drove them while I was with you, remember?"

Lorraine grinned at her. "You drove the Belgians? I thought we didn't let you do anything bigger than the ponies."

They both laughed for a moment then Marla spoke. "I wanted to see how you had settled in and find out what you thought of our barn."

"I'm glad you can replicate a lot of sawdust," said Charlie from his stool. "These floors are awful smooth and hard. Other than that, I can't complain. These fence panels are plenty strong. Nothing has gotten loose. I've got people spread throughout three decks, but they're all comfortable. I'd have to say your wagon train in space was working just fine."

"Wagon train in space?" asked Marla.

Charlie chuckled. "You know. Space is supposed to be the 'final' frontier. We're settling a planet like it's the old frontier. That makes this a wagon train."

"But wagon trains were slow, weren't they?" asked Sherman Jones, one of the other settlers, who had just walked over. "We're going pretty fast, from what I can tell." Marla had spent time with him as well.

"Warp 4 at the moment," replied Marla. "Yes that is a little fast for a wagon train. I still like the analogy, though."

She glanced at a chronometer on the bulkhead. "Well if you'll excuse me. I've must return to the bridge. Duty calls."

They said their good-byes and Marla headed towards the main doors out of the hangar. The doors opened and she stepped through.

As she did so, the corridor lurched. Everything went dark and she felt herself hit the far wall. Sounds of animals in terror came from the bay behind her. Emergency lighting kicked in almost immediately. She found herself floating near the ceiling. Artificial gravity was off.

She twisted in the air to look back into the bay. It was utter bedlam. Animals were drifting throughout the bay. The stalls had mostly collapsed and were floating around as well. The noise was overwhelming.

She tapped her com badge. "Bridge, this is the captain. What's happening up there?"

There was a pause before the voice of her husband responded. "*We're not exactly sure. We were on course, when suddenly we were thrown 15 light years laterally. Sensors have not indicated any other ships or anomalies in the area. Gravity will be coming back on momentarily.*"

As if on cue, Marla could start to feel herself being pulled to the floor. Fortunately, the gravity was turned back on slowly. She drifted down gracefully, rather than falling from eight feet. She was grateful for that.

The stomping of feed and sounds of frightened animals still came from the bay. She turned to look just as one of the Belgian draft horses came flying out the door. It turned and headed down the corridor.

It wasn't alone. Marla retreated into an alcove as horses, cattle, sheep, and other animals stampeded past her. They went both ways, and she could see them making different turns at junctions in the corridor.

It didn't take long for the hangar to empty. Marla glanced down the corridor. It was a mess. The carpet was torn and stained, the walls were scratched and dented, and a terminal down the hall was hanging from several wires.

Marla was just stepping out of her alcove when Charlie came running out of the bay. "You're all right!" he shouted when he spotted her. "We were afraid you'd been trampled."

Marla straightened her uniform. "I'm okay, but I'm not so sure about my ship." She gestured down the hallway. Sounds of animals could still be heard in the distance, along with the occasional human scream as a crewman was caught by surprise. "We've got to get these animals rounded back up."

Charlie nodded. "I'll get my people."

Captain QurtIS stood just outside the open doorway to the Holodeck. Tom Post and Weylin Miller were with him. They had been training in jungle combat routinely since their drubbing by the Felinoid Kenway. They had been training when they had been thrown through the trees. The Holodeck had then shut down and they found themselves floating high in the air until the gravity came on.

QurtIS was dusting himself off when he thought he heard something. "Did you hear that?" he asked.

Tom turned his head. "It sounds like stampeding Targs," he answered. "Whatever it is, it's getting closer."

At that moment, three bulls and several cows came around a corner of the corridor.

"Run!!!" shouted Weylin. He and Tom took off down the corridor as fast as they could.

QurtIS shook his head slowly and stepped backwards into the darkened holodeck. "Door," he said. The large doors obediently closed in front of him, sealing him from the charging bulls.

Tom and Weylin, not noticing that the other Klingon was not following, kept running down the corridor. The sound of the bulls behind them continued to close on them. They rounded a corner and found Jerry Jensen picking up a pile of containers he had been carrying when the gravity had cut off.

"Get out of the way!" shouted Weylin. Jerry didn't look pleased, but then saw the huge forms close on the Klingons' heels.

Tom hurdled Jerry as he went by. Jerry ducked through the door to the officers' lounge, shutting it behind him. The Klingons were already gone. He heard the bulls thunder by and sagged with relief against the wall. After a moment, he opened the door and peered into the hall. The bulls were gone, but none of his containers had survived. With a resigned sigh, he knelt to pick up the pieces.

Tom and Weylin continued running. They were starting to tire, but the bulls behind them gave them plenty of motivation to keep going. They turned a corner and came to a quick stop. It was a dead end. The only door at the end of the hallway said 'Airlock 3.' Tom rushed forward and hit the button. The door

slid open and he jumped in, grabbing Weylin and dragging him in.

Weylin reached over to hit the 'Cycle' button. Tom saw him just in time and grabbed his arm. "Not that one!. Just close the door."

The door closes right in the face of the first bull. It hit the door with its horns several times, glaring through the glass at the two Klingons. After a moment of this, it turned and walked slowly away with the other cattle.

Weylin pressed the button and the door opened. The two Klingons stepped out and headed towards the main corridor when Weylin slipped on something. He glanced down at the mess covering his boot with revulsion.

"Cows have no honor," he said.

Derrick Hughes glanced up from his display terminal in his office next to the botany lab. He thought he had heard something. She shrugged it off and looked down at the display of weather patterns on Corel 8. He jumped as a loud crash came from the botany lab. Grabbing his lab coat, he headed for the lab. The door to the lab was opening and closing repeatedly. He jumped through it to see the lab in total disarray. Most of the smaller plants were on the floor. A half-dozen goats were eating the greenery as fast as they could, although one goat had taken a fancy to a tricorder it was munching on.

This was more than he could take. He still remembered all too well the mess he had to deal with because of a loose Wiggitt. "Shoo!" he shouted.

The goats didn't even turn to look at him. They continued eating.

"Shoo!!!" he shouted again, flapping his arms in the air. One of goats turned to look at him for a moment, then went back to eating the fern it had found.

He shook his head and tapped his com badge. "Security, This is Lieutenant Hughes. I have several intruders in my botany lab that need removing."

Ross was standing over the science station on the bridge when Marla entered the bridge. She walked over to him.

"Any idea of what happened?" she asked.

"We'll know in a minute. We're checking our sensor records now. Wait! Back that up, Jan. I think I just saw something."

Jan Stephens was manning the science station at the moment. He backed up the record and played it forward slowly. He saw the small blip this time. "Enhance and enlarge grid 60 by 12 by 21," he said to the computer.

The designated area expanded. Ross recognized the electronic signature. "It's a micro-wormhole. That's what threw us this far." He reached over Jan's shoulder and tapped the buttons on the console.

"The energy it absorbed when we hit it has caused it to collapse. It's no longer a threat. We should search the area to make sure there aren't any others though."

Marla put her hand on her husband's shoulder. "Good. Now let's see about getting this ship back in order."

Matt Chism was Engineering, but he wasn't alone. Two security guards, three engineers, and fourteen sheep were there with him. The security guards were trying to herd the sheep out the door, but they weren't interested. One tried to get past Matt and head towards the Warp Core. He dove and caught it by the hind feet. He was trying to get back on his knees when something blind-sided him, knocking him sprawling. He was able to bring his head around just in time to see the ram charging him again. Then it hit him in the head and the lights went out. He crumpled to the floor.

It took nearly an hour for the crew of the *Rendezvous* and the settlers to round up all of the animals. Marla was standing in the hangar bay when Nathan and Jeremiah Smith walked in. Each was pushing a anti-grav sled with a sleeping bull on it. Nathan smiled at the look on Marla's face.

"We didn't want to hurt them," he explained. "But we really didn't want to go near them either. Did you know it takes almost 10 seconds on the heaviest stun setting to knock one of these things out? And I had to shoot it again just a minute ago when it started waking up!"

He laughed and pushed the sled over to the cattle pen, Jeremiah following.

The Klingons came in next carrying domestic geese. One goose seemed to have taken a real liking to Tom's forehead ridges. It nibbled at them, much to Tom's consternation.

But soon enough, all the animals were put away. Maintenance was hard at work repairing the damage that had been done.

Marla was sitting with the Taylors and Sherman Jones. "I'm sorry for the bumpy ride," she said. "I'm just glad that none of my crew and none of your animals were seriously hurt. The worst casualty was my chief of operations. It turns out that your ram gave him a concussion. He'll be okay and should return to duty tomorrow."

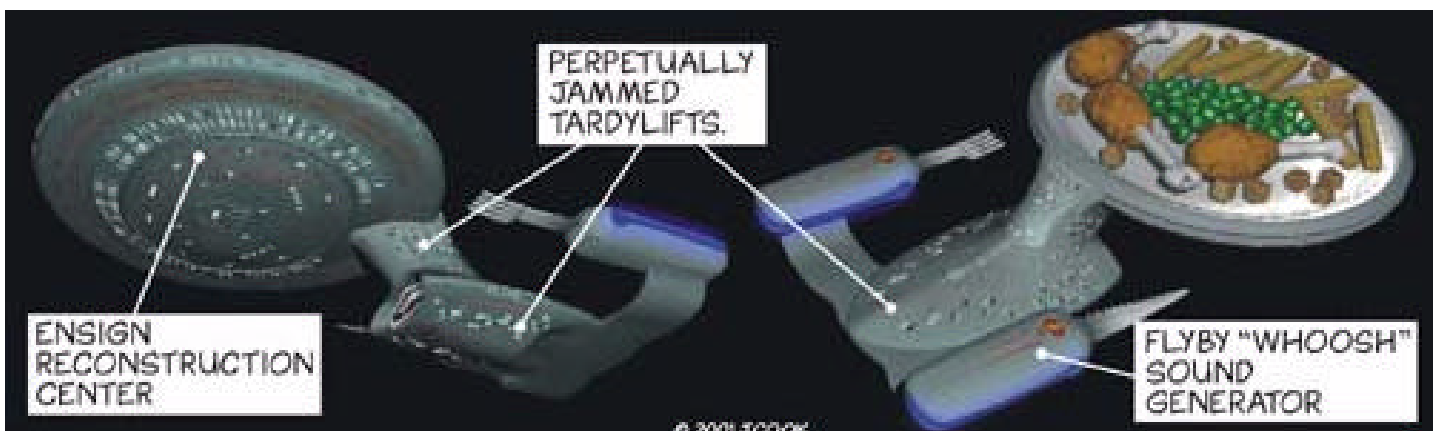
Charlie shook his head. "A micro-wormhole. All these weird things floating around in space make me nervous. Now you know why we want to go back and do it without all the technology. If you ever want to join us, there will always be an extra wagon, you know."

Marla smiled. "I know. Maybe someday, but right now, this is where I'm needed. Besides, I'm not sure my husband is as keen on the idea as I am. Andor isn't known for its farms."

Lorraine laughed. "It's never too late to learn. And from what I've seen," she said gesturing to the Andorian petting one of the horses, "He seems to be getting hooked already."

Captain's Log. Stardate 0109.15

We've dropped off the Taylors and other settlers at Liberty 7. I think they are already in love with their new home. I'll have to check back in on them to see how they're doing. Who knows, when I retire, Ross and I might just end up back here for good.





U.S.S. RENDEZVOUS NCC-1896

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