

REFLECTIONS: But I Digest

Please forgive my little excursion into digression last month. It seems so overwhelming, the whole two hundred article thing, I literally can't believe it's been that long. I cringe as I think of how much time has passed since that first rumination on all things Spock. Yet I marvel at the fact that I was able continue to find things to ruminate about.

After Spock, Kirk was just a natural choice, but it's everything after that I am most proud of.

At first I thought doing a regular column would be an exercise of mad futility and you know what?.....it was! At first.

But the world of televised science fiction genre is a varied and fascinating one.

A Lawyer friend of mine expressed her

dislike of Fantasy and Science Fiction to me. She says she can't get into it because it doesn't seem real to her. Over the years, several like minded friends of mine have asked me how do I watch it. They had all come to the conclusion that this is something that would and could never happen. They wanted to know the allure of it to me.

Well, the first thing I always do is separate the Fantasy from the Science Fiction. Folks who know me know I'm not a big fan of Fantasy. I need a foot in reality to be interested and Fantasy doesn't do that for me, for the most



I'm lazy, what's your excuse?

part.

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Same Place, Same Time, Different Date

The next monthly meeting of the U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek and Science Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, December 18 at the abode of Chief of Operations Ann Harding in Potomac, Maryland.

We'll start the stuffing our faces about 5:00 p.m., then talk with our mouths full about 7:00 p.m.

During this month's meeting, we'll talk about what fellow club members have been up to and catch up on the latest sci-fi television shows and feature films. For directions to this month's meeting, get the latest insert. Blah, Blah, Blah. ■

CAPTAIN'S LOG: *Fallen Star*, 'The American Invasion'

Question: What would you get if you combined two well-known science-fiction TV shows: the bold outer space adventure of *Star Trek* with the wacky humor of *Red Dwarf* (for those who don't know, *Dwarf* was a sci-fi comedy that aired in Great Britain a few years ago)?

Answer: You'd get *Fallen Star* and a fan film entitled "The American Invasion," which chronicles the first adventure of the *H.M.S. Britannic*, a British mining ship that receives a priority message to rescue the *U.S.S. Valiant*, an American ship that has disappeared.

Captain Sebastian Knight (Robert Allen, one of the creators of *Fallen Star*)

notes that the mining vessel isn't prepared for a rescue mission, but, as is often the case in science fiction, the *Britannic* is the closest vessel and therefore is ordered to find the U.S. vessel in enemy territory.

Knight then turns to Colin Jenkins (Nick Tilbury) and orders the lieutenant commander to power down their laser drill and prepare all systems for faster-than-light travel.

The captain then calls his engineer to get ready for "zoom speed" and tells Ensign Susan Davenport (Genevieve Faulkner) to lay in a course for their destination. Knight then issues a one-word command: "Initiate."

Lieutenant Elizabeth Darling (Caroline Baker) then receives a message containing the last known coordinates for the *Valiant* and forwards them to Davenport

at the helm.

Playing off the lieutenant's last name, Knight replies: "Well done, Darling."

Later, the ship arrives at the designated world and detects debris in space and three humans on the planet. Knight then says that the quickest way to find out what happened is to send down a landing party and ask the survivors.

Jenkins is put in charge of the investigation, so he and two other members of the crew report to the ship's armory, which is under the command of Crewman Nigel Humphries (Kevin O'Connor, who also serves tea to officers on the ship)



The *H.M.S. Britannic* approaches an enemy space station.
[ed. What's with the pink nebula?]

Humphries opens the weapons locker and gives the persons in the landing party laser guns (which look a LOT like *Star Trek* phas-

ers) before he and the other three crew members are beamed to the surface.

After materializing, the group heads toward the three human life forms. However, one member of the away team (a woman wearing a red uniform) is suddenly struck by a fatal energy bolt, and Jenkins orders everyone else to take cover.

The firefight ends when Jenkins uses an old-fashioned tactic: He picks up a big rock and throws it into the other side, hitting Captain Jett Logan (Daniel James) in the head. That distraction enables Humphries to get the drop on the others

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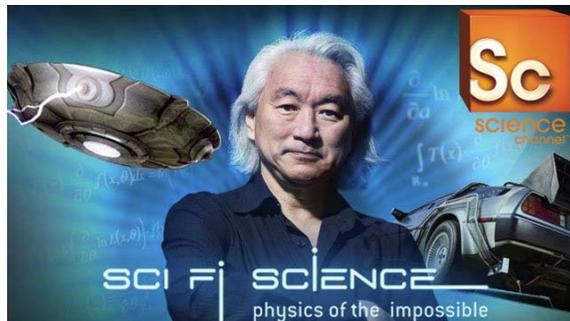
The opinions expressed in this publication do not necessarily represent those of the entire club.

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SCIENCE TREK: U Got What U Got, Got It?

I got nothing. I can say “sorry,” but what’s that worth these days? So I shall do what has been done in such situations since time immemorial...go find someone smarter than me. Someone like Carl Sagan (dead), Stephen Jay Gould (dead), or Michio Kaku (living and on Facebook).

For those fortunate enough to have a memory, you may recall that I talked about Dr. Kaku’s “Sci Fi Science” show a few lunar cycles previous. Dr. Kaku is, well, let me let his Facebook profile describe himself:



Dr. Michio Kaku takes us from the possible next door into the twilight zone realm of the almost possible.

Famed Futurist, Theoretical Physicist, Bestselling Author, Radio Personality and host of The Science Channel Series Sci Fi Science: Physics of the Impossible.

Comprehensive enough for you?

What are the types of things that Dr. Kaku explores? Here’s just a sample:

- The Science of Motion and 3D
- The Metaphysics of Teleportation
- The Future of Quantum Computing
- Can a Universe Create Itself Out of Nothing?
- Scientists Discover the First Carbon-Rich Planet—Which May Have Mountains of Diamonds
- The Colbert Report, Conan, and Science Education

And the ultimate in science fiction fantasy:

- Fusion Really Is 20 Years Away (which is progress because it’s been

30 years away for the last 70 years!)

So what does it all mean? (If you don’t know the answer, stop calling yourself a science fiction fanatic).

We are talking nothing less than the history of the future: science and science fiction. Science fiction means taking a step ahead of today’s science (and maybe even tomorrow’s) into the realm of “what if” (the same game the scientists

play, which is why science fiction writers must be faster on their feet mode of personal transportation).

You want to join the *Chesapeake* Writer’s group but don’t feel you have a story in you? Of course, you do! And if you’re having trouble getting it out, just look in the news for today’s science and take a step down the road to tomorrow’s possibility. You want to write a novel or short story? Go for it! Same formula applies, especially if no one else has thought of it before (or showed it just like only you can).

Want to skip the science because it’s just too darn hard to get it right? Want to make the world self-consistent but not necessarily feasible in our universe? That’s called fantasy (the root beer of the writing world).

Want to make it all up? Don’t want to follow any rules? That’s called bad writing. ■

Web Notes:

<http://www.facebook.com/michiokaku>

Second Officer Phil Margolies

ART CREDITS:

Facebook.com	3
lmbd.com	6
musicforgifts.com	1
Randy Hall	2,5
Trekmovie.com	
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I tell them that all GOOD Science Fiction is deeply rooted into fact. The term “science fact” (coined by Steven Spielberg of all people) is an oxymoron. Science Fiction is literature based on Science. Science in and of itself is based on fact. This is when the eyebrows raise and they say “But those things could never happen.” And I would ask them how did they know that? The response was usually, “Well, we can’t do it now?” And I would educate them, Man went from inventing the airplane to landing on the Moon in about sixty years. What makes you think that technology would remain stagnant for three hundred?

Then I would proceed to answer the obvious questions, I would explain how everything in *Star Trek* was based on fact. That things maybe improbable but they are possible. Most of these people would dismiss it simply because they figured that since they were so smart, there was no way that anything beyond their comprehension could ever become a reality. Then I would follow that up with, “Maybe you’re not as smart as you think you are.”

Some would contemplate this. Most would dismiss it. All was given something to think about and most would actually bring the subject up again to discuss it. A few would bring it up in a feeble attempt to belittle me. Those were the people I found amusing. They would also be somewhat puzzled that I would laugh at

these genre attacks. That usually made them angrier. I would tell them that the world of Science Fiction is the ONE place where every type of drama, emotional trappings and or brand of human suffering can be displayed in the world of Science Fiction. If the writer is good enough.

Star Trek showed me (and BOY would these folks get mad when I bring up *Star Trek*. They all consider *Star Trek* to be the end all and be all of Science Fiction and the one thing they can’t argue about because of public acceptance.) that MAN is universal, and when I say

MAN, I mean MANKIND. MAN will never be stagnant and neither is Science Fiction and once I realized that, the stories became endless. I never had to search for things to write about, it was all there. The good, the bad and the different.

Avery Brooks once called *Star Trek* “A glimpse of the infinite.” He was right on target and two hundred articles past is proof enough for me. These days I contemplate doing two columns simply because I have so much material I want to present to the world. I know that THAT would be tantamount to literary suicide and emotional kryptonite. Time would also play a factor, but all this does is reinforce to me that I may NEVER run out of things to write about. ■

Next Month: We return to *Andromeda*

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard



Ever wonder why Kirk only had two sets of clothes? Cogley’s retainer wiped out his whole salary. All those paternity suits, you know.

CAPTAIN'S LOG: *Fallen Star*, 'The American Invasion' [continued]

combatants.

When he recovers, Logan, who's well known as an explorer and adventurer, tells the British officers that the reason he and his security officers are so deep in Smegu-

Knight orders the ship to pursue the Smegulon vessel by following its exhaust trail.

Logan later tells the ship's senior officers that six months ago, the U.S. government learned the enemy aliens were plotting to eliminate all life on Earth with a sophisticated biological weapon.

The U.S. captain also notes that the Smegulons are taking the weapon to a starbase, where they'll incorporate its final deadly component.

But the trail of the enemy ship goes cold near a nebula which has what Knight calls "energy readings from a cloud of inert gas? That doesn't sound normal, does it?"

The *Britannic* enters the nebula, and Captain Logan comes to the bridge. Before long, they discover a Smegulon space station where one of the ships that destroyed the *Valiant* is docked.

When the station asks the ship for iden-

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From left: Knight, Darling, Davenport and Jenkins look on as Logan gives the

lon space is because the aliens are on the verge of completing a weapon capable of destroying Earth.

When everyone's back on board,

STAR TREK BOOKS: *Shadows on the Sun*

For those of us who grew up watching *Star Trek*, the Original Series from 1966 onward, we are somewhat aware that Dr. McCoy has a failed marriage in his past. What we did not know, as the TV series and subsequent movies, has never really addressed, is exactly WHAT happened in his marriage that caused it to fail. So when I stumbled across this book, on Amazon.com, and read its cover: "Dr. Leonard McCoy confronts his past and the wife he left behind", curiosity got the better of me and I decided that I had to buy this book. (Getting it became a challenge as the first book seller, which subcontracted with Amazon, canceled my order for the paperback version without any explanation and has NEVER responded to my inquiries. I was able to re-order the book from a different subcontractor, for close to the same price and was pleasantly surprised when what arrived was the HARDBACK version! Sweet!!!! Nice birthday present to

myself!!!!) This book did NOT disappoint!!!!!!

The story takes place not long after the movie: *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country* when the *Enterprise* and its crew are making their final journey home to be decommissioned and retired. No one is looking forward to be put in mothballs or put out to pasture when their jobs are abolished. (Age discrimination, anyone? I can relate!) However, before they arrive for that final retirement ceremony, (who really wanted to party with that?), Captain Kirk receives a message from Commodore Montoya that they DO HAVE ONE MORE MISSION! It turns out that they are being sent to a Federation planet, Alpha Gederix Four. Its inhabitants call their home by another name, Ssan and it is a culture of assassins. According to Dr. McCoy, and I quote: "The Klingons are children compared to these assassins..." This raised the

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COMING EVENTS

December 18..... Time for our next monthly meeting! We'll be at the Harding's Holiday Hall in Potomac, Maryland. We'll start eating at 5:00 a.m., then have the club meeting about 7ish.

CAPTAIN'S LOG: *Fallen Star*, 'The American Invasion' [concluded]

tification, it also arms its weapons and points them at the vessel. In response, Knight tells Darling to transmit an ID code that mentions how much they hate humans. The trick works, and the station powers down.

That gives Logan and his security team an opportunity to transport onto the station and remove the weapon. But once they're aboard, the U.S. team can only transmit audio and all the *Britannic* crew can do is listen and wait as the two sides fight it out.

Suddenly, a group of Smegulons takes the doomsday device onto the docked ship and flies out of the nebula.

The station begins firing on the *Britannic*, and Knight orders that the tele-

port device bring the U.S. officers back on board. Once that's accomplished, the captain orders the helm to set a pursuit course and try to catch up to the Smegulon ship.

But Jenkins learns that the situation is more dangerous than they ever imagined. Life on Earth has only 30 minutes left since the Smegulon ship is headed for that race's home planet, where the doomsday weapon will be inserted in an orbital space cannon and shot at high Zoom Speed to its target.

Nevertheless, Knight declares that the vessel has no offensive capability, only a laser cannon they use to mine for previous metals. Logan then decides to use that device to attack the Smegulons despite Jenkins' complaint that it takes hours to prepare the delicate device to reach full power and acquire a target. ■

(to be continued next month)

Captain Randy Hall

STAR TREK BOOKS: *Shadows on the Sun* [concluded]

question for me, how do Dr. Leonard McCoy and his ex-wife fit into this picture?

As it turns out, Dr. McCoy has had previous experience on this planet and the ex-Mrs. McCoy is now an ambassador assigned to this same planet with her current husband, Clay Treadway, to negotiate with the Ssani and they are traveling there on, (you guessed it!), the *U.S.S. Enterprise!* This puts Dr. McCoy in the unenviable position of being forced to face his painful past with her and, in spite

of his numerous attempts to avoid the ambassadors has run out of running room and is unable to hide anywhere on the ship to get away from her! As for McCoy's ex, it turns out that she is in an unhappy marriage with a pompous, Narcissistic A\$\$! (Be careful what you wish for because you just might get it!) Be forewarned, this book does NOT have a happy ending! ■

Pat McCoy, Xenobiologist



I see the reflection of the sun, but I can't find the shadow at all.