

96

# STAR TREK™

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ORION  
**SCOUT SHIP**

TYPE: RAIDER

LAUNCHED: 23rd C

MAX SPEED: WARP 8

WEAPONRY: PHASERS

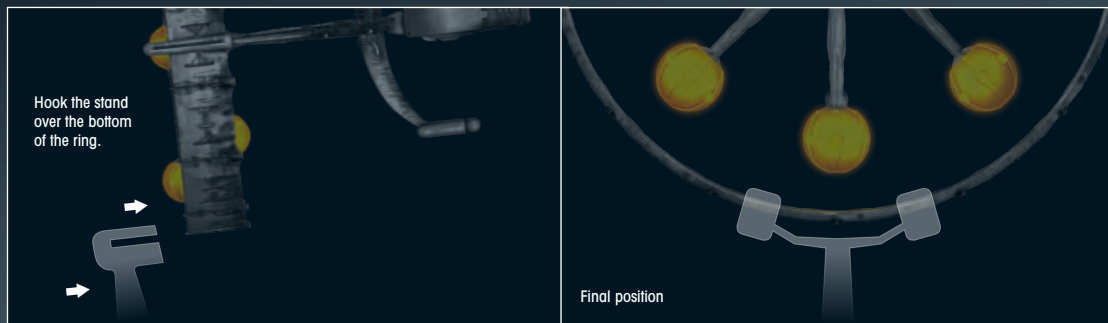


# ORION SCOUT SHIP

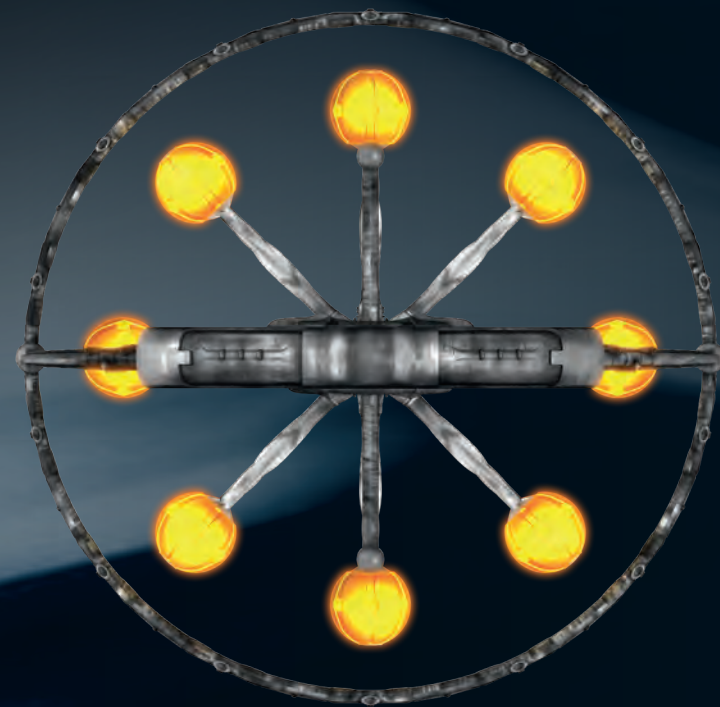
# Contents

- P04: ORION SCOUT SHIP
- P10: DESIGNING THE SHIP
- P12: D.C. FONTANA, SPOCK AND THE VULCANS
- P18: ON SCREEN

## Stand assembly:



## ORION SCOUT SHIP SPECIFICATION



OPERATED BY:	ORION SYNDICATE
TYPE:	RAIDER
IN OPERATION:	23rd CENTURY
MADE FROM:	HIGH-DENSITY TRITANIUM
LENGTH:	110 METERS (APPROX.)
MAX SPEED:	WARP 10 (23rd CENTURY SCALE)
WEAPONRY:	PHASERS

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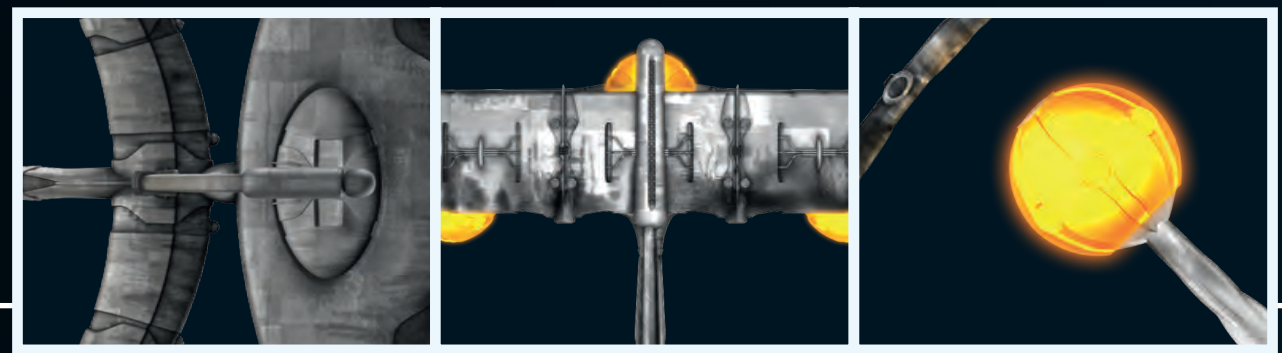
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▼ The Orion scout ship, also known as an 'intruder' or 'raider' vessel, had a curious illuminated engine apparatus dominating the rear section. This warp mechanism generated enormous power and propelled the ship to incredible speeds. It was so fast that the *U.S.S. Enterprise* could not even achieve a weapons lock on it.



The Orion scout ship was a small, extremely fast vessel used by the Orion Syndicate in the 23rd century. Its most distinct feature was an unusual type of warp engine design that featured two counter-rotating rotors with glowing spheres on the end.

This propulsion system could power the ship to speeds in excess of warp 10 in the 23rd century warp scale (about warp 8 in the revised warp scale that was used in the 24th century). At high warp speeds, the rotors spun so fast that the vessel appeared to be just a blurred ball of light.

The Orion scout ship consisted of a flat oval-shaped main body at the front that housed the crew. Behind and perpendicular to the main body

was a forward-facing crescent-shaped structure with weapon pods affixed to its extremities. This meant that there was one weapon pod above the crew module and one below. These pods fired phaser-like beams of directed energy, which were similar in destructive power to the phasers used on Starfleet ships.

#### CLOAKED CONSTRUCTION

The Orion scout ship's hull was composed of trititanium, a high-density material which blocked other vessel's sensors. This meant that other vessels could not clearly identify its origins.

In 2268, the *U.S.S. Enterprise* NCC-1701 encountered an Orion scout ship, although initially it remained something of a mystery. The *Enterprise* was on a very important mission transporting 114 delegates, 32 of them ambassadors, to a conference on a neutral planetoid code-named Babel. These talks had been called to debate the Coridan question.

Coridan, which was a dillithium-rich planet, had applied to join the Federation. It did not have the means to protect its natural resources, and as a consequence some species, such as the Orions, had set up illegal mining operations on their planet to plunder its dillithium. If the Coridans joined the Federation, their planet would be protected under interstellar law. While many species were happy to see them become members of the Federation, there were others that were vehemently against it, as it would put an end to them helping themselves to cheap dillithium ore.

# ORION SCOUT SHIP

With its unique warp engine, the Orion scout ship was hyper-maneuverable and capable of blazing speeds.



#### DATA FEED

The warp scale was different in the 23rd century than it was in the 24th century. In the 23rd century, warp 10 was 1000 times the speed of light, but by the 24th century it was recalibrated to mean infinite velocity.

◀ Orions were a green-skinned species. It appeared that Orion females were merely regarded as commodities to be bought and sold. In fact, the females were in charge and controlled the males via highly potent pheromones. Few males of any species could resist their allure and their innate skill at seduction.





◀ When the crew of the *Enterprise* eventually caught a glimpse of the scout ship it was moving so fast that it appeared to be little more than a small ball of light.

▶ The *Enterprise* was badly damaged during the attacks by the scout vessel. Captain Kirk decided to change tactics, and he made it look as if they were drifting dead in space to lure the Orions closer.



◀ The hull of the Orion ship was composed of high density trititanium that blocked the *Enterprise's* sensors. This meant that although the Starfleet crew knew it was shadowing them, they could not ascertain the identity of the vessel, or how many crew were on board. As the ship was so fast, it appeared that it was much more powerful and advanced than the *Enterprise*.



◀ As the scout ship came in more slowly at sublight speeds to finish off the apparently helpless *Enterprise*, Captain Kirk ordered a full blast of the phasers. The scout ship was taken by surprise and crippled in the attack. Rather than be taken prisoner, the Orions chose to self-destruct their vessel.

▲ The configuration of the Orion scout ship was highly unusual. A thin central 'spine' ran out behind the forward crew module, and attached to this was a large shroud ring, which contained the propulsion system. This comprised of two four-spoke rotors with illuminated spheres on the end of each one. The rotors spun in different directions and incredibly quickly, making the vessel appear to be just a blurred ball of light.

The Orion Syndicate, who were renowned pirates, therefore came up with a plan to stop Coridan from joining the Federation. An Orion spy disguised as an Andorian named Thelev was placed aboard the *Enterprise* in order to sow seeds of mistrust between the delegates. He did this by killing a Tellerite ambassador and pointing the blame at Sarek, the Vulcan ambassador.

Meanwhile, an Orion scout ship was dispatched to attack the *Enterprise*. After a period of shadowing the Starfleet ship, it turned and headed straight for it at tremendous speed, while firing its weapons. The *Enterprise* shot back, but the scout ship was so fast that even though the photon torpedoes were on the widest possible scatter they all missed the target. The scout ship had no such problems, and its weapons fire scored direct

hits on the *Enterprise*. Number four shield buckled and damage was reported on every deck of the ship. After the next attack, *Enterprise's* number two shield was taken out entirely.

#### PLAYING DEAD

It was not long before the *Enterprise* was in serious trouble. Kirk realized that he had to come up with an alternative plan if they were to survive. He ordered engineering to cut power, so it looked like they were drifting and dead in space. This encouraged the scout ship to come in more slowly at sublight speeds and use their weapons to finish them off at close range.

When the scout ship had closed to 75,000km, Kirk ordered the *Enterprise* to fire phasers. This disabled the Orion ship, but before they could ask

them if they wished to surrender, the scout ship exploded, leaving almost nothing behind.

Later, Spock worked out that they had been attacked by an Orion ship. Had Spock not been distracted by his father's ill health, he felt he would have identified them earlier. The fact that the scout ship had been so fast had thrown him. It was now obvious to him that the scout ship had been constructed for a suicide mission, and this was why they could use one hundred per cent of their power on the attacks. Their mission had been to create mutual suspicion among the delegates at the conference, encouraging them to go war with one another. The Orions then planned to profit from the conflict by selling both sides the dilithium they had illegally mined. Thanks to the crew of the *Enterprise*, this scenario was avoided.

#### DATA FEED

Thelev was an Orion spy who had been surgically altered to appear as an Andorian. He had been planted in the Andorian ambassador's retinue that traveled to Babel Conference aboard the *Enterprise*. He tried to sow seeds of mistrust between the various delegates by using terror and murder. He communicated with the Orion scout ship using a transceiver hidden in one of his false antennae, but he was eventually found out when it broke off during a fight.





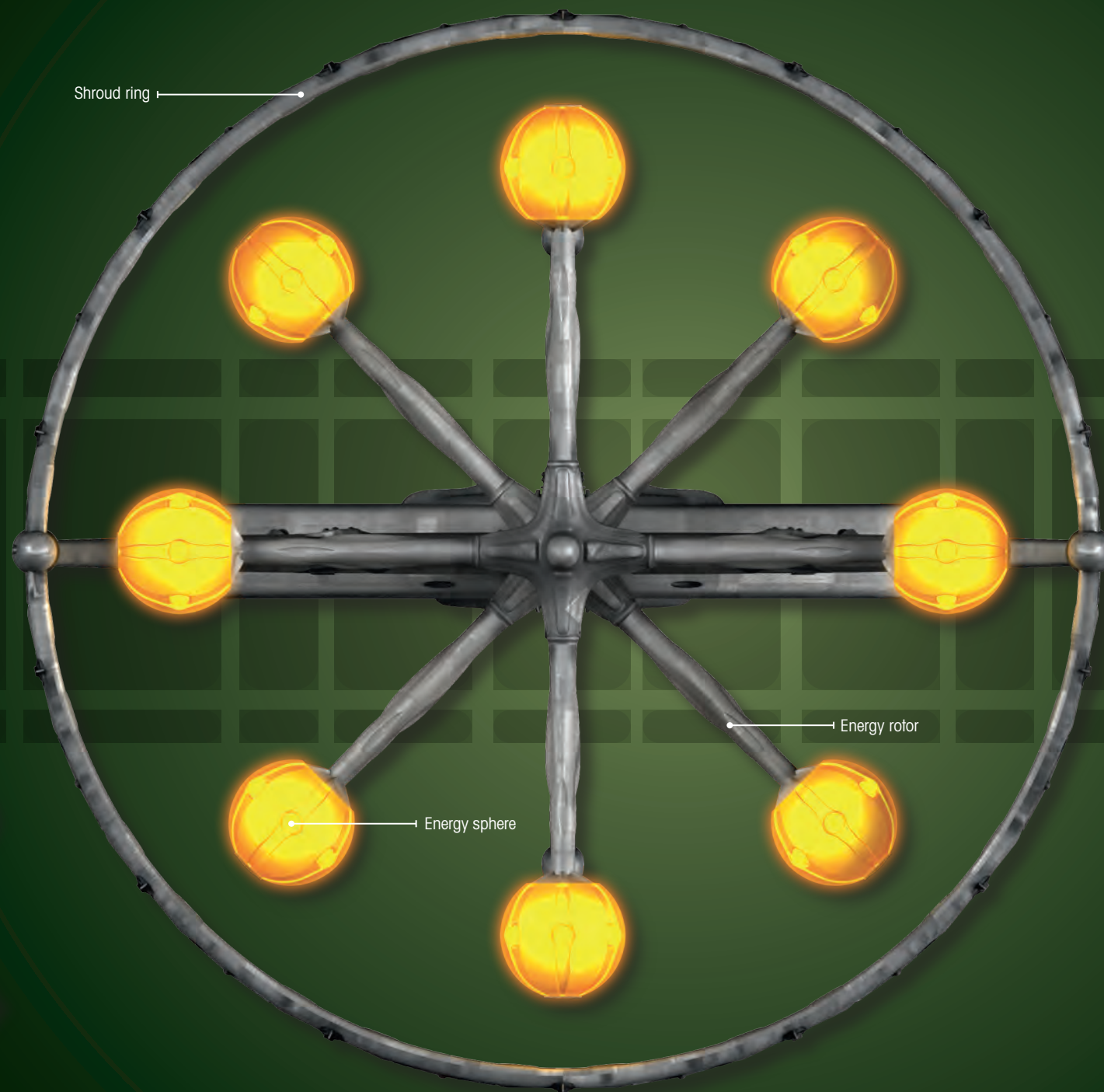
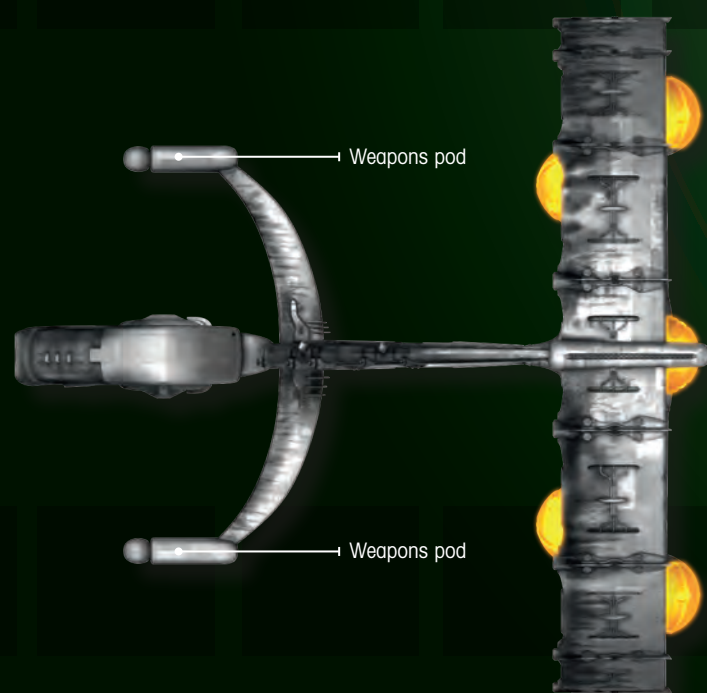
**DEVIOS PLAN**

Many Orions were part of a Syndicate that comprised of a number of traders, pirates and smugglers. They undertook illegal activities including slave trading, extortion, theft, raids, kidnappings and assassinations. Their primary goal was the accumulation of wealth, and they were second only to the Ferengi in the pursuit of profit.

In the 23rd century, the Orion Syndicate made huge proceeds from stealing dilithium ore from the worlds of the Coridan. The Syndicate was thus very concerned when the Coridans applied for membership of the Federation, as it would dry up a lucrative revenue stream.

The Syndicate decided to sabotage the peace conference by attacking the *Enterprise* which was carrying hundreds of delegates. Had the unidentified scout ship managed to destroy the *Enterprise*, it would have created mutual suspicion and possibly interplanetary war between numerous races.

If war had broken out, the Syndicate would have profited even more by supplying dilithium to all sides, while continuing to raid and plunder the Coridan worlds.

**DATA FEED**

Spock concluded that the Orion scout ship was so fast and impressive because it was designed to use all the power it produced. He surmised that it was constructed for a suicide mission, as it could use one hundred percent of its energy generation on attacks, leaving none left over for its return to base.

**ANCIENT CURES**

In the 23rd century, archaeologist Dr. Roger Korby translated medical records found in ruins on Orion that helped revolutionize immunization techniques, and they became required reading at Starfleet Academy.

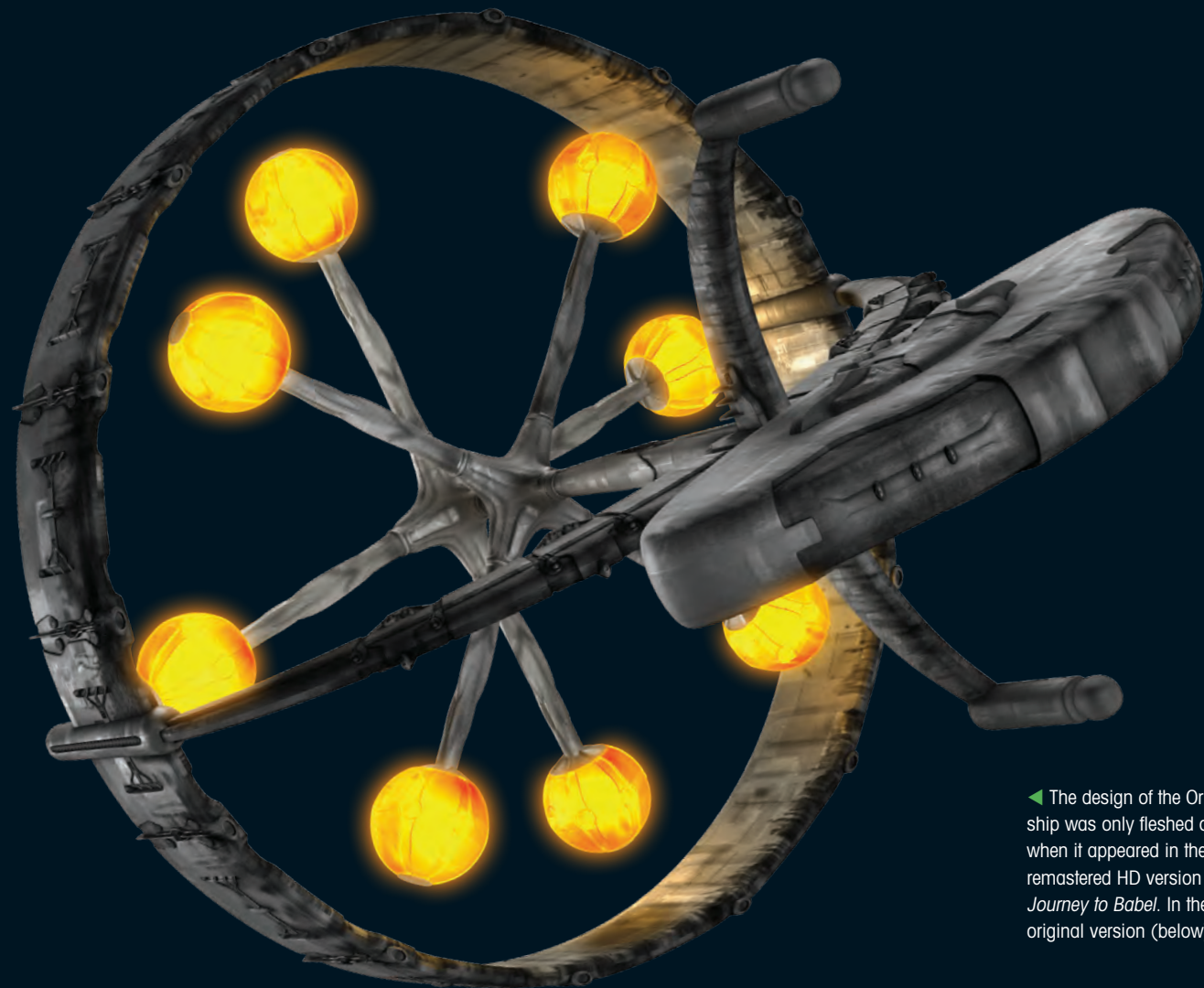
**DIFFERENT REACTIONS**

While human males were highly susceptible to the pheromones produced by Orion females, human females reacted negatively to the same pheromones and experienced headaches.

**TRADE PARTNERS**

The Orions had been trading with Coridan for several centuries. In fact, in the 22nd century the Coridans rejected a Tellarite proposal of a trade embargo against the Orions. The Coridan minister claimed that the accusation of Orion vessels attacking and raiding Tellarite freighters was slander.





◀ The design of the Orion ship was only fleshed out when it appeared in the remastered HD version of *Journey to Babel*. In the original version (below)

DESIGNING THE

# ORION SHIP

▼ The sketches that Okuda provided to the VFX team at CBS Digital showed the Orion ship from every angle.

Mike Okuda's design for the Orion ship was inspired by the original effect, Spock's dialogue, and an abandoned Matt Jefferies sketch.

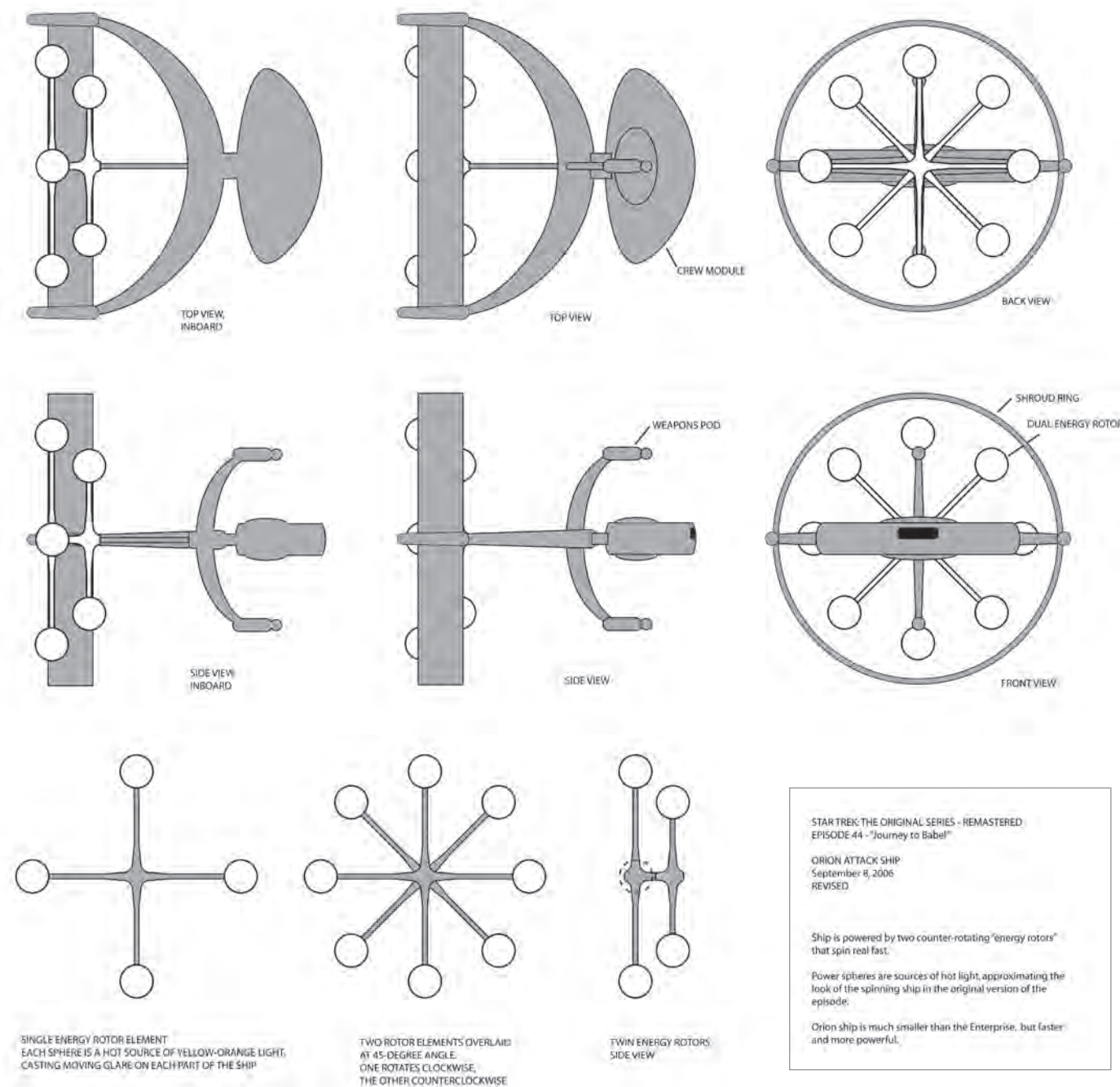
When the Orion ship appeared at the end of *Journey to Babel* it was little more than a spinning light. As Mike Okuda explains, in the 1960s this was often all the VFX budget would stretch to. "When a script called for something they knew would be beyond the show's budget or schedule, they would label a scene with the term (MEASURE.) This was their secret code, calling for all involved to put on

their thinking caps to come up with an ingenious solution. When it came to the Orion ship the script called for an 'insert' shot: VIEWSCREEN (MEASURE.)

"In that spirit, the wizards at the Joseph Westheimer Company (one of the main VFX contractors for the original series) created a high speed blip, as indicated by the script, but added a rotating 'star filter,' that gave a greater impression of energy and mystery."



When *STAR TREK* was remastered for its release in HD, the team took the



opportunity to upgrade several of the alien ships that weren't clearly visible on screen. "There were a lot of times when something we wanted to do wasn't possible," Okuda says, "but Dave Rossi, Denise, and I each had our personal lists of tweaks we wanted to make, if time and budget permitted. In my case, replacing the Orion ship was something that I'd really hoped to be able to address."

Fortunately, in this case there was enough time and money to make the change so Okuda designed a new ship. "I wanted to retain the impression of the spinning energy," he recalls. "I borrowed a page from one of Matt Jefferies' original concepts for the *Enterprise* - a ship with an unusual hoop-shaped propulsion system, then added two counter-rotating spinners. By putting the spinning lights inside the hoop, I thought

it might create some interesting moving highlights as the ship flew by. I wanted the engines and the weapons pods to appear to be quite large in comparison to the crew compartment, to show that the ship was mostly engines and weapons, as Spock's analysis suggested. In terms of the in-show technology, I thought the hoop might be a shroud that helped focus the warp field in a fore-aft direction."





# D.C. FONTANA, SPOCK AND THE VULCANS

The story for *Journey to Babel* was inspired by writer D.C. Fontana's fascination with Spock. She wanted to explore his background, including his relationship with his parents, Sarek and Amanda.

**D**OROTHY Fontana is one of the most important writers in the history of *STAR TREK*. She wrote under the name D.C. Fontana, as well as the pseudonyms Michael Richards and J. Michael Bingham. She contributed to scripts for a few television series before briefly becoming Gene Roddenberry's secretary.

It was not long before Fontana was writing episodes such as *This Side of Paradise* and *The Ultimate Computer*, while she also fine-tuned other people's screenplays. She was promoted to story editor at the age of 27, making her the youngest person in Hollywood at the time to hold this role, and also one of the few female staff writers.

Fontana went on to write many more episodes of the original *STAR TREK* series, became the producer of the 1970's animated series, and played a vital role in developing the characters for *STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION*, which she wrote for regularly in its first season. She also penned an early episode of *STAR TREK: DEEP SPACE NINE*.

It is fair to say then that Fontana contributed as much as anyone to the success of *STAR TREK*. One of the most iconic and influential episodes Fontana wrote that broadened the rich tapestry of the series was *Journey to Babel*. The idea came to her because she was fascinated by the Vulcans, and in particular the character of Spock.

▲ Dorothy Catherine Fontana's favorite character to write for was Spock. She was always drawn to his alien take on other characters and problems. She wanted to look into his background and wrote *Journey to Babel*, where the audience was introduced to his parents.

Fontana was inspired by several references to Spock's parents that had been alluded to in previous installments and she wanted to flesh out his background. This was all a far cry from how Spock had originally been envisaged when Roddenberry was putting together the series.

"He was a Martian, he had red skin, his name was Spock, he had this catlike curiosity, and there was no particular mention of the inheld emotions," remembered Fontana. "Spock's lack of showing emotions developed as Gene worked on the format. He became a Vulcanian from Vulcanis, and then he became Vulcan."

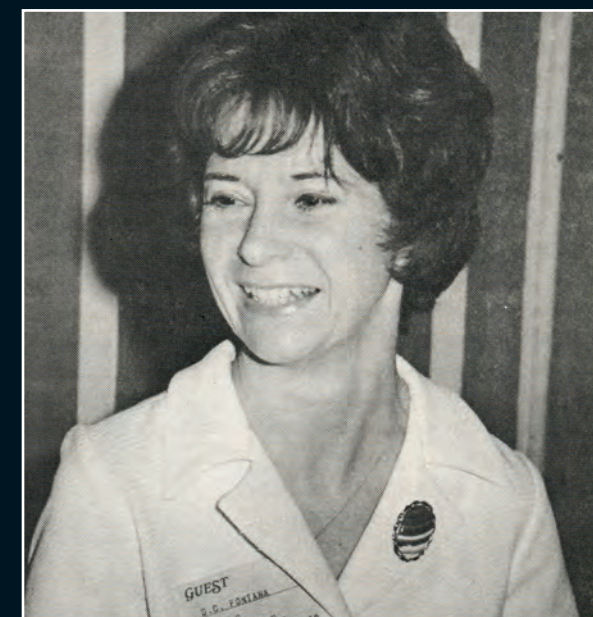
What particularly intrigued Fontana were the possibilities offered by such an unusual character. "He was alien, and he would bring an outsider's view not only to the stories, but the characters he was involved with," said Fontana. "He would provide an alien look at the captain, the doctor, the voyages they were on, the people they met, and maybe a quirky take on the problem."

## AN EVOLUTION OF SPOCK

As *STAR TREK* went into production, the character of Spock began to change. "They actually tried some red makeup on Leonard (Nimoy), but it didn't photograph well in black and white," said Fontana. "So, they went to what was called at that time 'Chinese yellow,' and that became the makeup. And Leonard always told the story of how Roddenberry would come over and smooth his hair down into his bangs, and that's how the haircut evolved."

The biggest changes in Spock involved the development of his Vulcan heritage and logical approach to life. This logical aspect of the character only added to Fontana's interest. "Here was a character who was extremely precise," said Fontana. "He didn't indulge in pointless fantasy. He would speculate, but always based on solid evidence and sound logic, and this was different from the very emotional character of McCoy and the action-and-emotion character of Kirk."

Fontana's first two scripts, *Charlie X* and *Tomorrow is Yesterday*, did not particularly focus on Spock, but toward the end of the first season she was offered the chance to rewrite a story that had been submitted by Jerry Sohl.



◀ Fontana pictured in the 1960s when she was working on *STAR TREK*. She sold her first script at the age of just 21. She was working on the military drama *The Lieutenant* with Gene Roddenberry when she moved with him on to *STAR TREK*. She wrote dozens of adventures of the *Enterprise* and fine-tuned countless others.



◀ Fontana penned *Charlie X*, the second episode of *STAR TREK* ever aired. It was based on a premise by Gene Roddenberry entitled *The Day Charlie Became God*. It was contributions like this that led Roddenberry to promote Fontana to staff writer and then to story editor. She became one of the most creative forces on *STAR TREK*.



◀ Fontana remembers that the character of Spock went through a number of changes before he emerged as the logical, emotion-suppressing character we all came to love. At first, he was a Martian with red skin before he became a Vulcan. This picture from *Where No Man Has Gone Before*, which originally did not air on TV, actually shows him smiling.





▲ Fontana was heavily influenced by *The Naked Time*, which had shown that Spock did have emotions under his logical exterior.



▲ *This Side of Paradise* involved alien spores that filled an individual with happiness. Their effect on Spock was particularly dramatic.

"We were losing a story editor, Steven Carabatsos, and Gene said, 'If you can rewrite this script (*This Side of Paradise*), and if it satisfies me and it satisfies the network, I'd like you to be the story editor,'" recalled Fontana. "I thought about the script, and basically went back and said, 'You know, the problem with the script, Gene, is it's a Sulu story, which is not a bad thing, except it should really be a Spock story.' If it was just a Sulu story, and this is no reflection on George (Takei), it was then an ordinary love story, whereas if you

▼ Fontana made Spock the central character in her rewrite of *This Side of Paradise*. She remembered that she wanted to show Spock falling in love and enjoying himself.

throw the Spock element into it – how the spores affect him with his half-human/half-alien biology, his mindset – all of these things made it a far more interesting story. It revealed a whole other side of Spock that led to other things later on."

**LOSING CONTROL**

Roddenberry agreed with Fontana's reasoning that Spock should be the central character of the story and told her to write the script. As she began work, *The Naked Time*, another episode where Spock lost control of his emotions, was very much in her thoughts.

"If you look back to *The Naked Time* you had a hint of what was there, a hint of the agony that was buried deep underneath," said Fontana. "Remember that Spock at this time of his life was approximately 36 years old, so he had all those years of conditioning as a Vulcan. *The Naked Time* opened that gate a little bit, and I opened it even wider in *This Side of Paradise*, because it allowed not for the agony, but for some joy to come through."

*This Side of Paradise* turned out to be pivotal in Spock's development, revealing the depth of his suppressed emotions and the sacrifices that he had made to live as a Vulcan. And the script won Fontana the job as story editor. From that point on,



► *Amok Time* gave a vivid demonstration of Spock's descent into Plak tow [blood fever] as he hurled his meal out of his quarters.

until the moment she left the show, her fingerprints were seen on almost every episode. In her new position, Fontana had a significant input into the next major episode that focused on the Vulcans, *Amok Time*.

**VULCAN SECRETS**

Theodore Sturgeon's story dealt with Spock's return to his home planet, in the grip of an uncontrollable urge to mate. Fontana remembered that the script underwent very few changes, but she did make some important additions.

"The initial scenes, where Spock is first starting to show his descent into the Pon farr, Sturgeon wrote as McCoy coming up to Captain Kirk and saying, 'You should have seen what just happened with Spock – he did this and he did that,'" said Fontana. "Well, television and motion pictures are a 'show, don't tell' medium. Sturgeon was very experienced, of course, as a prose writer, but he hadn't done all that much in the visual medium. So, what I did was take it and change it so you see the soup dish coming flying out, and all this anger, and Christine Chapel being in tears. All of those things, that initial sequence where you see something's radically wrong with Spock, you had to see it rather than hearing about it.

"There were other things we put in: the long speech about sometimes having is not as good as wanting, that was my speech. But mostly the show worked pretty much as it was."

**VISITING VULCAN**

*Amok Time* helped to establish the Vulcans as a distinct and interesting race, and gave viewers their first glimpse of the home planet. "We realized we couldn't show a lot of Vulcan," said Fontana. "One of the stipulations for the script was that it be in a relatively tight area, so that we just get a flavor, a feeling. So you have the ceremonial arena, the temple bits, and so on.

"I think the costuming, the ambience that was brought to it, the ceremony itself, which was all Sturgeon's, was very nicely done. It indicated a hint of something not quite like Earth, but with enough images that we could say, 'Oh yeah, I understand what they're trying to do here.'



There had to be some relevance to Earth, just because we were writing for humans. There were some little touchstones – the bells, the chime, the gong – and yet they were used in slightly offbeat ways. And, of course, the weapons were different, and the ceremony itself had these violent elements in it that you would not expect in a human religious ceremony for a wedding."

**MORE SEX**

The violent elements, and the revelation that Vulcans were not always logical, provided another step in the evolution of Mr. Spock's people. Fontana complimented Sturgeon's script

▲ *Amok Time* also gave the audience its first look at Vulcan, which was a much stranger place than most people expected. It introduced the first Vulcans we had met, apart from Spock, such as T'Pol, and the peculiar rituals that were part of their heritage.

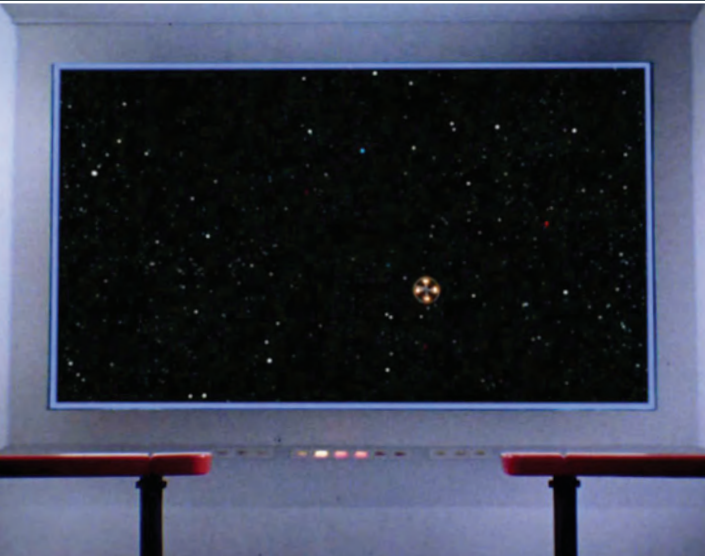




◀ The inspiration for *Journey to Babel* came from a line Fontana had written in *This Side of Paradise*, which identified Spock's parents as a teacher and an ambassador. Fontana has repeatedly named this episode as her favorite out of all the scripts she wrote.



◀ The main plot of *Journey to Babel* revolved around the conference that was attended by various aliens that had not been seen before, such as the Tellarites and the Andorians. Fontana, though, was always more interested in the dynamics of Spock's family background.



◀ The storyline involving the mystery craft that was shadowing the *Enterprise* was subsequently added to the plot. As Fontana said, she was more concerned with exploring Vulcan relationships between parents and children, but she "wrapped it up in a mystery, and in an adventure."

for what it added to their culture. "He probed into the idea of what's alien about the Vulcans," said Fontana. "There was this hidden emotional release that they had to have at certain times. Of course, the myth arose that Vulcans only had sex every seven years, which is incorrect. It's just that they had to have sex every seven years. The rest of the time it was as they wished."

#### SPOCK'S FAMILY

Fontana wrote the next Vulcan story, *Journey to Babel*, herself. Although she had not realized it at the time, she had planted the seeds for a story about Spock's family in *This Side of Paradise*. "The idea really came out of the line toward the end of *This Side of Paradise*, where Spock says, 'My mother was a school teacher, my father was an ambassador,'" said Fontana.

"We needed to see the family background that Spock was raised in, what was going on with him truly personally," continued Fontana. "This was the first mention (in *Journey to Babel*) that he and his father had been estranged. Well, why? What's with his mother, what feelings did she have in this particular triangle between husband and son? And what kind of a woman was she to marry a Vulcan, go to Vulcan, live like a Vulcan, raise a half-Vulcan son? What was all that about?"

Once Fontana had decided that the story would involve Spock's family, she began to sketch in a little bit of their backstory. "I made some notes to myself about what was going on with them," said Fontana. "They were expanded later when I did more stories about this. But, of course, that's the sub-plot – the main plot involved the journey to Babel. It was the first show we had done with a number of different aliens all together in one place with some goal in mind, and bringing in the whole murder and the whole political background was a lot of fun. That was the main story, but personally I was more involved, in terms of interest as a writer, with the personal story of Spock and Sarek and Amanda, which actually took up very little room – and yet that was the part of the story that everyone remembers."

The storyline involving the intrigue between the various delegates on board, the murder and the mystery of the unidentified ship attacking the *Enterprise* was added to the plot later. As Fontana



◀ Even though Spock had not spoken to his father in 18 years, he showed how much he cared by risking his life and volunteering to give his father a blood transfusion. Of course, Spock could not admit this and claimed it was the only logical course of action to save a life.

said, she managed to get all this background into the character of Spock by "wrapping it up in a mystery, and in adventure."

Fontana has repeatedly named this episode as her favorite out of all the *STAR TREK* episodes she wrote. She said, "It went into the Vulcan relationships between families. I think that's a story that's universal and timeless – that communication between parents and children. And that to me was the big story. The rest of it was an adventure, it was a spy story, it was a mystery, it was an action story – but all in all it was really about the parents and the child. There had still been a vast lack of communication between them and they needed to find each other as parent and child."

#### TRUE LOVE

Although *Journey to Babel* answered many questions about how Spock was brought up, it raised new questions about Sarek and the rest of the Vulcans. It is almost impossible to watch the episode without suspecting that Sarek has feelings for his wife. Fontana was clear that, despite his Vulcan demeanor, Sarek married Amanda because he loved her. "She was a breath of fresh air in his life," said Fontana. "There was true love

there, there was great respect and certainly great caring between the two of them, but expressed in a very Vulcan way."

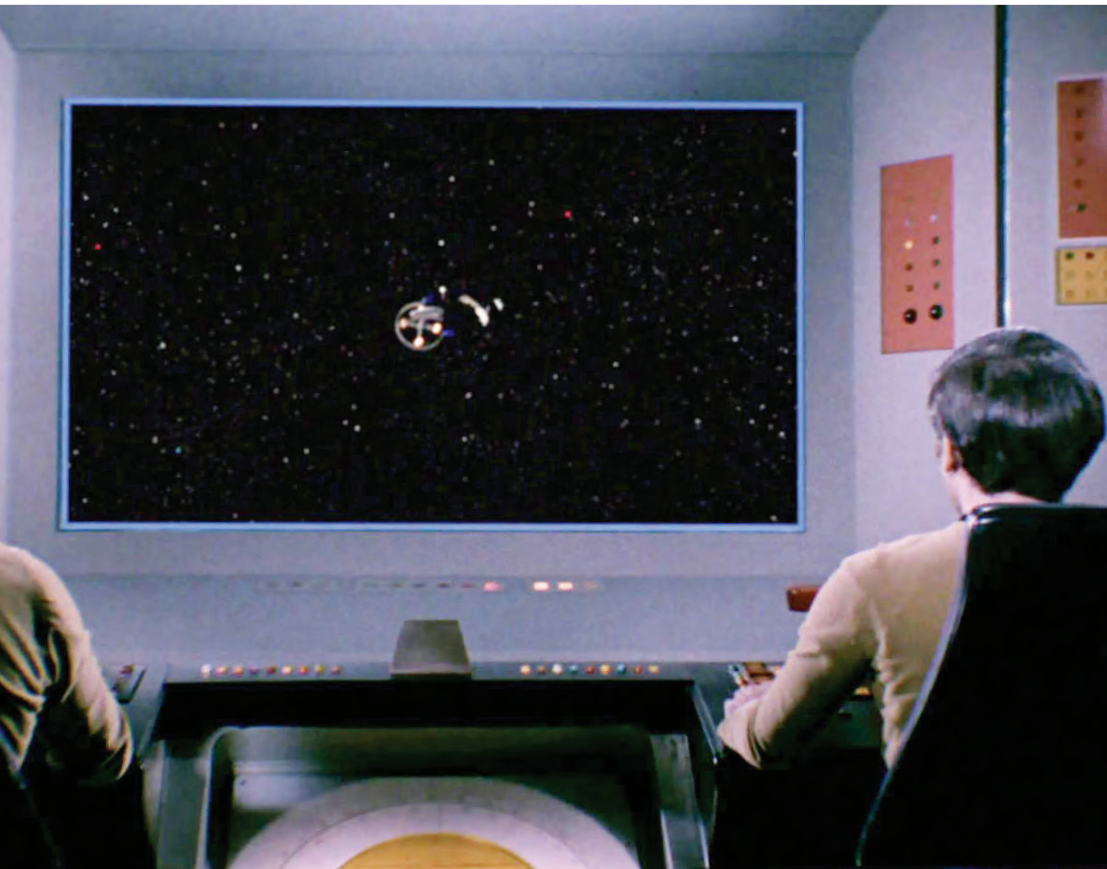
#### HIDDEN EMOTIONS

This begs the question of just how emotional Vulcans are. Fontana's take was that, "Vulcans are the way that they are because of thousands of years of physical and mental and emotional conditioning. Spock had that wild element in him. When you think about it, Sarek had to have some kind of wild element in him too, but I think Spock more so because biologically he was more subject to emotion because of his human half, which he had to keep clamped."

"It seems to me that, in the depths of their personal lives, Vulcans do have emotions and show emotions in their own way," continued Fontana. "What I did in *Vulcan's Glory* (Fontana's Vulcan novel) was imply that intimate touching was almost a form of the mind-meld, where the two minds and bodies came together. That for me was how Vulcans continued to express their emotions – through an intimate form of mind-meld, not an intrusive mind-meld where they had to go into an unwilling mind."



# ON SCREEN



## TRIVIA

Both the Andorians and the Tellarites made their first appearance in the *STAR TREK* episode *Journey to Babel*. Actor William O'Connell, who played Thelev [pictured below], was told that the makeup to turn him into an Andorian would "only take a little time." As it transpired, the makeup took about two hours to apply, and O'Connell found the process laborious. As for the Tellarite makeup, a piece of foam latex was glued to the central part of their faces and obscured the actors' eyes, so they could barely see where they were going.



In the episode *Journey to Babel*, we learn that Spock has not seen his parents in four years and that he has not spoken to Sarek in 18 years. We also learn that Sarek is 102.437 in Earth years, even though Mark Lenard, the actor playing him, was only seven years older than Leonard Nimoy.



Spock reports that he gets readings of "trititanium" in the Orion scout ship's hull. According to Gene Roddenberry's novelization of *STAR TREK THE MOTION PICTURE*, the *Enterprise's* hull was also made from trititanium.

- FIRST APPEARANCE: JOURNEY TO BABEL (TOS)
- TV APPEARANCE: STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES
- DESIGNED BY: Mike Okuda

### KEY APPEARANCES

#### STAR TREK: THE ORIGINAL SERIES

##### *Journey to Babel*

The U.S.S. *Enterprise* NCC-1701 is tasked with transporting over a hundred VIPs to a planetoid code-named Babel. A conference is due to take place there where they will discuss whether or not to allow Coridan to join the Federation.

Some species are vehemently against the idea as they have been illegally mining valuable dilithium crystals from the Coridan system. If they join the Federation, it would put an end to their criminal activities as Coridan would fall under the protection of Federation law.

Among the dignitaries are Spock's father, Sarek, to whom Spock has not

spoken in 18 years, and his human mother Amanda.

After a Tellarite ambassador is found murdered, the evidence points to Sarek as the prime suspect, but before the truth can be learned, he suffers a heart attack. His only hope of survival is a transfusion from Spock.

If tensions were not already high enough, a mystery vessel is shadowing the *Enterprise*. It then launches a series of lightning quick attacks that leave the *Enterprise* badly damaged. Captain Kirk has to use all his ingenuity to save his ship from what turns out to be an incredibly fast Orion scout ship that is determined to scupper the conference.

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