

Star Trek The Return to Melmac

One of the last of his race, the aged Gordon Shumway dares to take over the Enterprise in order to attempt a sling shot maneuver to time travel back to the late twentieth century to prevent the catastrophe that destroyed his home planet . . .

But first, a light snack . . .



A work of fan fiction by Samuel Stokes

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Star Trek: The Return to Melmac

EPISODE 2

By Samuel Stokes

"Captain's log, stardate 1332.8. The Enterprise has been commandeered by the Melmacian Ambassador, Gordon Shumway. He has somehow managed to gain control of the ship's computer. It seems that we must either find a way to negotiate with him or else use force to regain control of the ship."

"Are you done?" said Shumway, impatiently.

"End captain's log," said Kirk.

"Do you always stop right in the middle of something to make log entries?" asked Shumway.

"Well," said Kirk, "Not always..."

"Anyway," said Shumway, "Don't try anything or I'll use this handy control belt that I got from the Kelvans."

"Security," said Kirk, attempting to call his bluff, "Take the ambassador and confine him to his quarters. Give his control devices to Mr. Spock for examination."

Two security officers pointed their phasers at Ambassador Shumway and began walking towards him when Shumway pressed a button on his control belt. The two security officers froze where they stood. Spock and Kirk examined the security officers.

"Pretty neat, huh?" said Shumway, "And it's also a transport inhibitor, so don't go trying to get me that way, either."

"What have you done to my officers?" said Kirk, showing the first signs of real concern.

"They're fine," said Shumway, "I've just immobilized them."

"How long will they stay like this?" asked Kirk.

"Until I press this button," said Shumway, gesturing to his control belt, "Or until they need to go the bathroom."

Spock raised his eyebrow at this.

"Yeah," said Shumway, "This is control belt 2.0. Control belt 1.0 didn't have that feature, and let's just say the result wasn't pretty."

"Do you understand that what you are doing is treason according to Starfleet regulations?" asked Mr. Spock.

"I know," said Shumway, "But some things are more important than regulations. I mean what would you do if your planet was destroyed and you were the only one of your species remaining?"

To Spock's surprise, this gave him pause for thought. Spock's home planet had been destroyed by the Romulan Commander Nero, leaving only approximately 10,000 Vulcans alive. In fact, Spock had proposed a time travel mission to Starfleet in order to repair the timeline, by preventing Nero's time incursion. Although the proposal was worded in such a way that the timeline reparation was for the greater good, the half-human, half-Vulcan commander knew that his plan was driven by the feelings of grief that he had buried deep within his mind. Starfleet had thus far rejected Spock's proposal, but he had already spent considerable time revising it for reconsideration.

It took Shumway's voice to break the silence, once again, "So, if Scotty could go ahead and get my star drive tied into the warp engines, then we can be under way."

Sensing an opportunity, Kirk responded, "I have great faith in my chief engineer, but Melmacian technology is so obscure to us..."

"Right, right," said Shumway, "I'll head down there and see what I can do. But remember, I have control of the ship, so don't try anything funny. I don't want to have to push any buttons, if you know what I mean."

The Melmacian Ambassador stepped into the turbolift and the bridge crew watched intently as the doors closed, springing immediately into action the moment that Shumway was out of sight.

"Analysis, Mr. Spock," said Kirk, "How could he be controlling the ship with that small device?"

"Unknown, sir," said Spock, "But internal sensor data suggests that the orb device is not controlling the ship directly. It is more likely that it is transmitting instructions to a separate device that has been implanted somewhere on the ship."

"But where, Mr. Spock?" asked Kirk.

"Could be virtually anywhere," said Spock, "There are access terminals to the main computer throughout the ship."

"Chekov," said Kirk, "Lead a search team. Use tricorders to search deck by deck for the device and open all access panels for visual inspections, in case the device is shielded against our tricorders."

"Aye, Captain," said Chekov, who left the bridge via turbolift to organize his team.

"Uhura," said Kirk, "Send out a priority one distress signal and alert Starfleet Command of our situation."

"Aye, Captain," said Uhura.

"Spock, you have the bridge," said Kirk, "I'll be in engineering."

Moments later in engineering, Scotty was busy installing the Melmacian star drive to the Enterprise's warp engines. Kirk entered to see Shumway standing on a stepladder so that he can see what is going on.

"Report, Mr. Scott," said Kirk.

"I don't see how it can be done sir," said Mr. Scott, "They are entirely different systems."

"That's ok," said Shumway, "Melmacian technology is adaptive. Just power it on and it'll install itself. It's a plug-and-play drive."

Mr. Scott used a long tool, which he placed inside the star drive's ignition chamber and pressed a button that sent an electrical jolt into the chamber. The star drive whirred into action for about five seconds and then began to sputter and choked to a halt.

"Hmmm, that's odd," said Shumway, "Let me see that tool."

Scotty handed the tool to Shumway who examined it for a moment and then whacked the side of the star drive with a loud clank. The star drive whirred into action again, and this time continued to run.

"That's better," said Shumway, "I believe you will find that our speed has increased considerably."

"Sulu to Captain Kirk," came a voice over the intercom.

"Right on cue," said Shumway.

"Report, Mr. Sulu," said Kirk.

"Captain," replied Sulu, "The ship seems to have gone into an unknown dimension of sorts. I'm not really sure how to describe it, but if the navigational sensors can be trusted, we're travelling over a thousand times faster than maximum warp."

"See," said Shumway, "Like I said, we should make it to the Melmac system around second supper time. If anyone needs me, I'll be in the mess hall."

Shumway left engineering for yet another meal.

Kirk walked to the intercom and announced, "Senior staff to the briefing room."

A few minutes later, the senior staff met in the briefing room.

"Ensign Chekov," said Kirk, "What were the results of the ship-wide search?"

"Nothing, Captain," said Chekov, "I'm afraid we were unable to locate the device."

"Is it possible the device could be hidden deeper within the ship?" asked Kirk.

"I do not see how, sir," said Chekov, "I had men crawling through every access tube in the ship, Captain."

"Well, check them again!" said Kirk, showing signs of frustration, "The device must be somewhere."

"Aye, captain," said Chekov.

"Spock," said Kirk, "Can we reroute ship controls to a different console?"

"I have tried, Captain," replied Spock, "But the device has blocked every attempt to access ship controls so far. I will continue to attempt to bypass it, but it may be too deeply integrated into the system."

"Bones," said Kirk, "What is the condition of the two security officers on the bridge?"

"Stable," said McCoy, "They appear to be conscious, but their voluntary muscle control has been seized. They will most likely stay that way until Shumway release control of them, or until nature calls..."

Uhura, who had been monitoring communications through her earpiece, abruptly interrupted, "Captain, I'm receiving a priority one transmission from Starfleet Command. Our orders are to attempt to subdue Ambassador Shumway by force, or else . . ." Uhura's face dropped, "or else, destroy the ship."

Kirk along with the rest of his staff knew that this option was on the table, and although it had thus far gone unspoken, everyone was aware that it was Starfleet regulation to destroy the ship in the event that it fell under enemy control. A few short hours ago, no one would have suspected that the miniscule ambassador from Melmac was either an enemy or a threat of any kind to the ship, but now the situation seemed to be headed toward an unimaginable worst-case scenario.

"Lt. Uhura," said Kirk, stoically, "Signal security to prepare squads to converge on the mess hall in order to capture the Ambassador. They have authorization to use deadly force if they encounter resistance."

"Aye, sir," said Uhura, who began sending the signal.

"Everyone back to their stations. Send any of your non-essential personnel to the escape pods, and prepare to abandon ship on my signal."

"Aye, sir," responded the senior staff, who all rose from their chairs in unison and expertly performed their duties.

"Spock, Scotty," said Kirk, "Meet me on the bridge."

On the bridge, Kirk, Spock, and Scotty met around the science station. Their faces showed a stone-like strength as they gathered around the console to perform their most terrible duty.

"Will Shumway be able to override the destruct sequence?" asked Scotty.

"Doubtful," replied Spock, "The auto-destruct sequence is a highly-protected encrypted subroutine in the ship's computer. It also contains a number of redundant circuits so that if the main computer is compromised it can still trigger the explosive reaction through other physical conduits."

With incredible calm, Kirk said the words, "Computer, initiate auto-destruct sequence."

The three officers entered their voice authorization codes.

Kirk set the auto-destruct countdown to ten minutes and entered the final code, "Zero, zero, zero, destruct, zero."

A ten minute timer appeared on the screen and began ticking down the seconds. There were now two possible outcomes. The security team would capture Shumway in time for the auto-destruct sequence to be disengaged, or the ship would be destroyed in a blinding explosion of matter and anti-matter, leaving whatever crew that managed to reach the escape pods stranded in deep space, hundreds of light-years away from the nearest Federation planet.

"Kirk to security. You have ten minutes to capture Shumway. Report immediately when he is apprehended."

The security team surrounded the mess hall in every possible direction – in the corridors and in the decks above and below, through which they would attempt to enter through the access tubes. With eight minutes to go, two security officers climbed slowly and cautiously through the access tubes and carefully opened the hatch into the mess hall. Good fortune seemed to visit them as Shumway appeared to be asleep on a reclining chair in the activity area. The two security officers exited the access tubes and inched over to Shumway until they had a clear shot over the furniture that was between them and the Ambassador. As they aimed and prepared to fire, Shumway suddenly snorted and rolled over to one side depressing the button on his belt and immobilizing all of the surrounding security guards.

"Captain!" cried Sulu as the security guards on the view screen suddenly appeared immobile.

Everyone gazed at the screen in horror. As there were only three minutes left on the auto-destruct counter, they began to resign themselves to their grizzly fate.

"Lt. Uhura," said the Captain, "Prepare to signal – all hands, abandon ..."

Suddenly one of the two immobilized security guards on the bridge began shuddering violently, drops of sweat pouring from his forehead. Abruptly, he regained voluntary muscle control and sprinted to the turbolift. Just as Shumway had described, the control belt released the security guard when he had to answer nature's irresistible call.

The security guard got off the turbolift and sprinted down the corridor to the public restroom that Shumway visited upon his arrival to the Enterprise. He dashed into the stall to relieve himself, when he heard Uhura's voice over the ship's intercom.

"All hands, abandon ship. Repeat, all hands, abandon ship."

The voice sounded buzzy and distorted. This caught the guard's attention as he was going to the sink to wash his hands. His suspicion aroused, he removed the face plate from the console and was shocked to discover a glowing device attached to computer circuits. He would normally never consider touching an unknown device, but considering the gravity of the situation, he grasped it tight and pulled with all of his might. The power surge that accompanied the forcible detachment of the device knocked the security officer unconscious, and his body and the rogue device landed on the floor nearly simultaneously.

There was a sudden jolt felt throughout the ship, as the ship abruptly dropped out of warp and came to a full stop. Kirk shot out of his chair.

"Report, Mr. Sulu."

"All stop, sir."

"I don't know how you did it, Mr. Scott!" cried Kirk, who then turned his attention quickly to auto-destruct timer, which displayed 45 seconds. "Computer, disengage auto-destruct sequence."

"Auto-destruct sequence disengaged," said the computer, in its same steady tone.

The bridge crew breathed a collective sigh of relief.

"Scotty," called Kirk over the intercom, "How did you do it?"

"It wasn't me, sir," replied Scott, "I read a power surge from deck 2, just before we dropped out of warp. I've sent Lt. Kyle to check it out."

"Lt. Kyle, report," said Kirk.

"Lt. Kyle, here. I have found Security Officer Stevens unconscious in the public restroom. It appears that he removed an alien device from the computer console."

"Medical team to deck 2," ordered Kirk.

All eyes turned to a suddenly embarrassed-looking Chekov.

"Mr. Chekov," said Kirk in a solemn tone, "Didn't your security team check the computer consoles in the ship's bathrooms?"

"Bathrooms?" asked Mr. Chekov in absolute astonishment, "I didn't know the Enterprise had bathrooms."

Attention diverted from the shrinking Ensign, when suddenly Uhura shouted, "Captain, look," gesturing towards the main viewer.

Shumway had snorted again in his sleep and rolled back over the other way, releasing the battalion of security officers from their immobilized state. The two security officers that already had their phasers

trained on Shumway fired simultaneously. The officers had their weapons set to stun, so Shumway was knocked unconscious (well, he remained unconscious, anyway). The guards approached Shumway and seized his orb controller and his control belt.

"Security to Captain Kirk," said the officer, "We have apprehended Ambassador Shumway."

Everyone would have cheered if they weren't so exhausted from their narrow escape from such dire circumstances.

An hour later, the senior staff met once again in the briefing room. The meeting probably would have taken place sooner, but it took several security guards to carry Shumway to the brig. Melmacians tend to be considerably heavier than they appear. The ship had reversed course and was en route to the nearest star base to deliver Shumway for court martial and to have the Melmacian star drive, which seemed to be irrevocably integrated into their warp engines, examined.

"I just can't see how the thing can be removed," said Scotty, "It just attached itself and became a part of the system. If I try to extract the thing, it could cause a warp core breach."

"Spock," said Kirk, "Do you think the device poses any immediate threat to the safety of the ship."

"I don't believe so," said Spock, "As long as the orb controller is in our hands, I believe we are safe."

"Captain," said Uhura, "I'm receiving a priority one communication from Starfleet Command." Uhura's face showed bewildered surprise, "Starfleet has approved Mr. Spock's recommendation to use the Enterprise to execute a slingshot maneuver to travel through time to stop Nero's time incursion. They believe the integration of the Melmacian star drive will give the Enterprise a tactical advantage over Nero's ship. Our orders are to do whatever is necessary to prevent the events which led to Nero's destruction of Vulcan and the devastation and enslavement of numerous other planets."

The ship crew paused for a moment, emotionally drained from the day's events, but after a moment, when the orders sank in, their highly-trained minds mentally began preparing for their next mission before they heard the captain say, "All hands, battle stations."

TO BE CONTINUED...