

Captain's log, stardate 9203.2:

We have been sent on a mission to go back in time into the late 1960's of Earth's history in order to find out more about the mysterious Gary Seven, first encountered by the starship Enterprise during a similar mission twenty years ago, and who has dotted history texts ever since. We are to use the slingshot effect to reach the twentieth century and, while there, we are to contact Mr. Seven and gather information as to his mission and origin, as he most undoubtedly will know ours. Also, we have been commissioned with a general fact-finding hunt to give historians a better view of the late twentieth century, as records of this period are sketchy at best. Heading this part of the expedition will be Asook Yan, the esteemed Federation historian from the planet Aurelia, our new Records and Archives Officer.

Eric William Johnson, commanding Arcturus, out.

Space, the Final Frontier...

These are the voyages of the starship *Arcturus*!

Star Trek: Arcturus

“...Where Change is the Only Constant” By John Colagioia

The controls were set for the mission. Idrisu, the Deltan science officer and chief computer specialist, and Rykan T’Kor, a female Andorian engineer, were hovering above the science and engineering station computers making last minute checks on the warp equations. This was one mission with no room for error. A single mistake could send the ship to the wrong time period, perhaps even into oblivion. Neither prospect seemed acceptable to Starfleet Command, so one more scan of the equations looked to be a reasonable idea.

“At warp nine, if we use Sol as our focal point...” the Senior Assistant Chief of Sciences started.

“...We’ll crack the engines off the ship before we can make the turn,” T’Kor interrupted. “Although there is the chance of us making it into the right time period, I don’t think we would have much of a chance of making it back to the present...and somehow I don’t think that the Commodore would appreciate us losing the warp nacelles en route. You’ve got the mathematical theories right, but do they teach you anything about keeping the ship together in those Academy computer courses? Maybe if we went at a normal speed, say, less than warp eight, the ship will accelerate slowly enough so that, maybe, just maybe, we can survive this mission, despite you...sorry, no offense meant.”

“It’s really hard to offend a Deltan. It all has to do with psionics. I’d explain it to you, but your brain would probably implode,” Idrisu responded.

“Well, it might, but at least *I* know where I left my hair before the weekend started.”

“Well, I just wish I could be you, Miss Perfect...”

“People, can we get some work done **before** the shift is over instead of segue-ing from warp equations to banter, or do I have to send you two to your quarters and get some *serious* specialists?” first officer Admiral Bryan Ackermann called over the noise.

“Sorry, Admiral, we just got carried away. (You’ve done it again, ‘Cueball’).”

“(I’ve done it? What about you, ‘Potato Bug?’)” Idrisu whispered. “(You started it!) ...And sorry.”

“Ditto. Let’s get back to work. The maximum safe speed in this ship, according to the manuals, is about warp seven-point-three. So, to keep things on the safe side, we’ll base the equation on warp seven-point-one. So that makes the angle of approach...” T’Kor entered figures into the computation.

“Perfect! We finally have the equation set. Re-input the new course. Let’s get this mission underway. Admiral, we have the new course ready and verified. Whenever you’re ready, we can start,” Idrisu reported.

Ackermann touched a control on the arm of the command chair, opening an intercom channel to the ready room located aft of the bridge. “Eric, the ship is ready.”

“On my way,” replied the voice of Commodore Eric W. Johnson, the *Arcturus*’ commanding officer. Moments later the turbolift door on the port side opened and Johnson stepped out, moving directly to the center seat as Ackermann sat down nearby.

“Mister DuLac,” Johnson commanded, “lay in the course toward Sol. Mister Kale, warp 6!”

“Course plotted, Lord,” young Galen DuLac reported.

“Engaging warp drive, ahead warp six,” Kale added.

The journey toward Sol was uneventful. As the crew prepared for the time displacement, the klaxon of the red alert sounded throughout the ship. “Ready to accelerate to warp seven point one, sir,” helmsman Kalin Kale stated.

“Engage!”

“Warp six point two.... Point four.... Point six.... Point eight...,” reported Kalin Kale with cool efficiency. But all eyes on the *Arcturus*’ bridge remained glued on the viewscreen, and the bright, yellow sun at its center. “Six point nine... Warp seven...” The *Arcturus* started to vibrate within the gravitational stresses. “Warp seven point one...”

The *Arcturus* rushed almost straight toward the sun, the speed and angle of approach causing the ship to enter a planned time

warp.

“Maintaining warp seven point one,” Kale reported.

On the screen, the disc of the sun filled the viewer.

“Approaching breakaway point!” announced Idrisu.

“Stand by!” Johnson shouted.

“Now!” shouted Idrisu a moment later.

The *Arcturus* lurched. The eyes on almost everyone on the bridge went wide. It was not spoken, but everyone suddenly knew the time warp was not going as planned. Waves of colors bombarded the viewscreen. The engines groaned in protest.

“Something is wrong!” Kale shouted. “We’re diverging from the pre-programmed parabolic course!”

To Be Continued...

This story is continued in the 24th century and can be found on the Stories Archive in the year 2367 at:

“...Where Change is the Only Constant – Part 2”