

Star Trek Log Three

Alan Dean Foster

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More lively adaptations from television's most popular science-fiction series! Complete in this volume:

ONCE UPON A PLANET: The crew lands on a planet for rest and recreation, a planet programmed to play out each person's favorite fantasies. Suddenly, the system runs amok, and the crew is chased by fantastic creations of their own imaginings.

MUDD'S PASSION: That reprobate trader Harry Mudd smuggles a love potion aboard the Enterprise. The first two people affected are Nurse Chapel and -- would you believe -- Mr. Spock.

THE MAGICKS OF MEGAS-TU - Captain Kirk and company meet a strange goat-man named Lucien on a mysterious planet. But why does he look so familiar?

Star Trek Log Three Details

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From Reader Review Star Trek Log Three for online ebook

Leo Knight says

Another thrift store find, I had great fun reading these three tales based on episodes of the animated series. I vaguely recall seeing a few of the animated episodes from my childhood. Alan Dean Foster did a great job of bringing the familiar characters to life, and fleshing out what were probably fairly sparse half hour scripts into readable stories. I especially enjoyed "Mudd's Passion", as it brought back one of my favorite characters, that incorrigible rogue, Harry Mudd. I took great joy imagining actor Roger C. Carmel's delivery as I read his dialogue.

Vincent Darlage says

A fun collection of stories. They have a real sense of menace to the characters despite the problem of knowing they'll survive. Imaginative and fun.

Tracy Poff says

Continuing, after quite some delay, my series of reviews of Treklit, we come to Alan Dean Foster's *Star Trek Log Three*, another in his series of novelizations of *Star Trek: The Animated Series*. This volume contains adaptations of "Once Upon a Planet", "Mudd's Passion", and "The Magicks of Megas-Tu".

Once Upon a Planet

This story is a sequel to the *TOS* episode "Shore Leave", in which the *Enterprise* happens upon a 'shore leave planet' that is designed just to satisfy, as Kirk noted, the need of complex minds for the simplicity of play.

The *Enterprise* has been overtaxed, lately (the stories in these novelizations are written as taking place in sequence), so Kirk asks for something special in the way of reward for the crew, and he gets it: approval for shore leave on the Shore Leave Planet, in the Omicron region.

Upon arriving, Uhura, Sulu, and McCoy beam down together and note that everything seems to be as it was when last they saw the planet, down to the appearance of Alice and the White Rabbit. They go their separate ways in order to enjoy their own-private-fantasies, but McCoy has scarcely come into view of the Southern mansion he dreamed up when he is set upon by armed playing cards, straight out of *Alice*, who attack him in deadly earnest. He manages to call for an emergency beam-up just in time to escape them.

Shore leave is canceled as the crew of the *Enterprise* strive to determine why the planet is attacking, why the Keeper didn't intervene, and what has happened to Uhura, who has vanished without a trace.

This story is pretty good, and translated well by Foster.

Mudd's Passion

Cutting shore leave somewhat short, the *Enterprise* is ordered to investigate the activity of an old 'friend', Harry Mudd, who we last saw in "I, Mudd". He is up to his old tricks, swindling people far and wide. This time, he's selling a love potion.

This story is very thin and no better for Foster's efforts.

The Magicks of Megas-Tu

The *Enterprise* is sent to investigate the unusual phenomena at the center of the galaxy, including a 'negative black hole' busily ejecting matter, which they presume to be the source of all matter in the galaxy, drawing its energy from a multitude of other universes. Then they begin to be drawn into a cone-shaped vortex which is drawing in—and destroying—matter, from which the *Enterprise* cannot escape. They gamble that it may be safer in the center of the vortex, and, passing through it, they find themselves in another place, strange to them, operating by no known laws.

The delicate equipment of the *Enterprise* does not take kindly to this lawlessness, and begins to fail. The crew, dependent on this equipment, begin to fail as well. When the situation has grown most desperate, the *Enterprise* is suddenly saved by a strange alien—half man, half goat—who appears on the bridge. He restores their environment with what appears to be magic, then introduces himself:

"Who am I? Oh, you want a name! Call me Baal." He paused thoughtfully. "Or Lucien. Yes, Lucien. But above all, call me friend." One finger fluttered skyward as he declaimed, "Never could I abandon those who have come so far to frolic with me . . . for such purpose you must have been sent."

Lucien introduces the to the planet Megas-Tu, where the physical laws correspond to what the humans would call magic. His people had ventured out of their own universe before and encountered Earth, but their welcome had not been so warm. When others of Lucien's people discover the humans, they quickly put them on trial for the crimes of their species, as exemplified by the Salem witch trials, in which, weakened by the distance from their own world, the Megans were persecuted and even burned.

Kirk argues that if humans were once so savage, they have changed, and continue to strive to change, to be better and more noble. The Megans accept that this may be so, but declare that Lucien still must be punished for bringing the humans to Megas-Tu. Kirk defends him, as well, accusing the Megans of being as cruel as they accused the humans of being. In so doing, he passes a secret test, proving by his concern for Lucien, known also as Lucifer, that humans truly have changed. Should humans again visit Megas-Tu, they would find a warmer welcome.

Where to begin with this one? The adaptation is good—superior to the original. It spends too long on the setup and not enough on the resolution, but it's still well done. As for the story, it was obvious to anyone just who a goat man named Lucien would turn out to be, but it was satisfying, all the same. Kirk and McCoy question whether Lucien was really the Lucifer of myth, and McCoy concedes that it doesn't really matter, except:

"It's just that—if he was, Jim—this would be the second time he was on the verge of being cast

out. But thanks to you, this is the first time he was saved.”

The author of this episode, Larry Brody, indicated that originally, the *Enterprise* was to meet God out in space, but that idea was nixed by the censors. But meeting the Devil in space was fine, and so the episode was born. This episode must have been influential, indeed. In the first episode of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*, “Encounter at Farpoint”, Q puts the crew of the *Enterprise* on trial for the crimes of humanity, and Picard, too, argues that Q should consider whether humanity is presently as savage as in times past. Then in “Where No One Has Gone Before”, the *Enterprise* is taken to the edge of the universe, and find it a strange place where reality is impacted by thought. Then, in *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier*, the *Enterprise* (under Kirk’s command, this time) visits the center of the galaxy, where they find a godlike being who turns out to be evil.

In summary

The first and last stories in this are quite good, though the middle one is forgettable. That’s a pretty good ratio for novelizations of television episodes. “Once Upon a Planet” is perfectly like any *Trek* episode you’ve ever seen, and “Mudd’s Passion” is like most of the bad ones. “The Magicks of Megas-Tu” isn’t a top-tier story, but it’s pleasant enough, and interesting in how it presages later *Trek*. If you’re a *Trek* fan looking for a little light reading, this book isn’t bad.

Joseph says

An excellent read. Foster has a gift for imagery seldom found in literature of any kind. The only problem, and a minor one at that, is some scene transitions aren’t clearly indicated, so the story will occasionally jump settings without the reader being initially aware. A small price to pay for such vivid descriptions, though.

Joseph Kubelka says

Some classic trek lit.

Robert says

Weak

John says

I own and have read all ten but have them them grouped in one record in my listing. I started reading them again in 2014.

1976 average grade B

2014 average grade B-

Animated Trek, three stories per book.
B+/A-, B, B-

Baal Of says

Enjoyable fun for a fan, but not the greatest volume. A lot of revisiting of themes that had already been done in the original series.

Kevin says

I really enjoy reading the original series novels and yet, sadly I was disappointed with this book. The first and third stories were okay but I really hate Harry Mudd so I just tried to get through the middle story as fast as I could. Unfortunately the two that were just okay were merely that. Okay. I wasn't blown away by them and I felt that the Magiks of Mesa-tu was just a little bit too tongue in cheek although it was slightly enjoyable. I know I sound like I am contradicting myself but that's how I feel about this short book. I always enjoy reading about the star trek crew but these were not the best stories I have read.

Curtiss says

Another three episodes from the Animated Star Trek Saturday morning cartoon series have been adapted by Alan Dean Foster in novella form. Nearly the only format available of the Animated Star Trek series.

Kenneth says

World of fantasy, encounter with Mudd, Angel & demons....

Raja99 says

(I have read this book at least three times.)

Though this book drags a little, the final story--"The Magicks of Megas-Tu"--is well-treated. Overall, it's an enjoyable and well-executed novelization. Perhaps I enjoyed it so much because it may be "comfort reading" ;-)

Charles says

See my review under Star Trek Log 1: These are the stories from the Saturday morning cartoon of Star Trek.

Rich Meyer says

The third Star Trek Log again has Alan Dean Foster doing a trio of adaptations from scripts of the animated Star Trek series. This volume features two sequels to TOS episodes ("Once Upon a Planet," a sequel to "Shore Leave" and "Mudd's Passion," using Roger C. Carmel's inimitable rogue), and an original on ("The Magicks of Megas-Tu"). For once, all three are relatively entertaining. One has to wonder how much better the stories might have been had Foster actually watched the show instead of just using the shooting scripts. "Mudd's Passion" has Spock considerably out of character, even being under the influence of a "love potion," but it is still a fun read.

Zachary says

They're quick, easy reads. It's interesting how in my head the characters sort of shift between the original cast, the reboot cast, and the animated cast (the Logs are novelizations of Animated series episodes, usually three to a log).
