



Shell Game

Melissa Crandall

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While on a routine mission to retrieve a research drone for recycling, the "U.S.S. Enterprise" TM encounters a Romulan space station adrift within Federation borders. Exploring the lifeless station, the crew finds ghostly apparitions flitting at the edges of sight. Soon the "U.S.S. Enterprise" is also inexplicably without power. Captain Kirk and his crew must now solve the mystery of the strange apparitions before the Starship suffers the station's fate.

The situation becomes desperate when a Romulan warship arrives looking for the station, and the Romulan Commander accuses the Federation of treachery. Before Captain Kirk can save the Starship "Enterprise" from complete destruction, he must avoid becoming drawn into a deadly shell game, a game that will leave no winners and no survivors.

Shell Game Details

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Author : Melissa Crandall

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Surreysmum says

[These notes were made in 1993:]. This is a nice little ghost story, with Spock and McCoy taking leading roles on the investigation of a Romulan space station found floating inexplicably abandoned, like the *Mary Celeste*. Eventually, it proves to be yet another one of those energy-eating creatures, glommed onto the station's power source, and somehow reducing everybody's body temperature at the same time. Of course the Romulans show up and accuse the Federation of sabotage, thus endangering everybody's chances of survival, and Kirk pulls his men (and women) out once again - those who weren't wearing red shirts, that is. Quite atmospheric, especially in the early stages of the exploration of the station.

Eric Evans says

Star Trek is always my goto for sci fi. I believe this is the only book this author wrote in the series, and she did a great job. I loved the banter between Bones and Spock, she may have had a little much though but I'm not complaining. Plus the fact it's a ghost story makes it even better.

Jerry says

Mediocre at best.

Daniel Kukwa says

More "Star Trek" comfort food. There's an intelligent, interesting mystery to be solved, some nice last-minute twists, a few solid action set-pieces...but it's lacking the truly horrific feel of haunted novels such as "Bloodthirst". Had "Shell Game" milked that kind of atmosphere for all it was worth, a pleasant diversion could have been transformed into a compelling, goose bump inducing read.

April Harrison says

A nice mystery. The twist at the end was pretty neat. And McCoy had a big part in it. Something I, as a McCoy fan don't see nearly enough!

Alejandro says

I have many fond memories of this particular book since it was the very first novel of Star Trek that I ever

read. Even it's a first edition with yellow protection on the border of the pages! Gosh! How I loved when they used to do that on US books! Back in 1993, I was already a Trekker but you have to picture that I live in Costa Rica and by then, cable didn't exist (at least here) so, even that DS9 was starting to air at US, here it was just something that I read from magazine articles, I even need to read the "Emissary" novel to know the premises of that "new" Trek series. TNG was on air here but not so fast as one can expected, if I am not mistaken, we were like in the middle of the 4th season, when at US it was already the 6th season. And about the movies, I was able to watch "The Undiscovered Country" at a cinema theater (the previous ones I caught them on TV). You see, here on Costa Rica, "Star Trek" wasn't a big deal when I was a kid, they even didn't air it! Geez! So, my sci-fi TV series from my childhood were "Lost in Space", "Space: 1999" and "Battlestar Galactica" (original one), so my introduction to Star Trek was due the happy event of catching "The Wrath of Khan" a saturday afternoon while I was visiting my grandparents' house. I liked a lot and still is my favorite Trek film but back then I wasn't a Trekker yet. Then, one friday night, in a local channel, they aired something called "Star Trek: The Next Generation" and I started to watch it, since I never watched before "The Original Series" (I did it later when the great cable TV came to my life) so I wasn't in the struggle of the hardcore Trekkies deciding if they will accept that new series or not. For me in that moment was like, okay, Kirk is on films and Picard is on TV, ok, cool, life goes on. But even then, I wasn't a Trekker, I was just a person who enjoy to watch Star Trek stuff, and then... "The Best of Both Worlds" got into my life and never, NEVER was the same! THEN I became a Trekker!!! Along side with this story, there was my story about reading books, by then I was really into reading horror books (in Spanish at that moment) and already reaching a very good level at reading books on English, so all those elements and events went to take "Shell Game" from a shelf in a bookstore. When I read the premise that it was like a horror story in space with the Original Crew (and most important, from the cover I noticed that the story must be located on the films' era. Very important to me at that moment since back then it was the era that I knew about the Original crew), I said to myself: "Why not? It seems interesting." and the rest is history. Thanks to this book I was able to enjoy a lot of great stories of Star Trek universe and I am still enjoying them, but the start of my Trek books was here on "Shell Game". It's a great novel with a delicious ambiance, having the Original crew wandering into the darkness (pun intended ;)) of a desolated Romulan space station. I won't spoil the book with explanations but I can assure you that this book can easily being the closest thing that you'd ever read of a ghost story in a Star Trek novel. Highly recommended.

Jesse A says

For a "quick" read this one was brutally dull.

Sahil Udani says

I think this is the last pre 2000 Star trek book I am going to read. Somehow the book never lived up to the tv series formula. Its been a long time, but somehow the original series characters seemed very annoying with type-cast personalities.

The story largely revolves around an abandoned Romulan space station, and the trouble Enterprise crew find them selves in after trying to solve the mystery. The initial part plays more like a super-natural thriller rather than a sci-fi story. However to give some credit to the author, the pace was fast, and never seemed very dull. It just did not feel like a Star-trek adventure though.

Allan says

Finding myself in a sci-fi kick, I found this book on my shelf. I must have had it for over 10 years. So I picked it up and read it again.

This book is a pretty good read. It is competently written, though not amazing. The author does a fair job in giving atmosphere to the book, and she kept my attention throughout my reading. There are a few minor jumps-to-conclusions, but nothing that doesn't go right along with the *Star Trek* formula. In fact, it would make for a decent episode.

The description on the back of the book is somewhat misleading due to the way that the story unfolds. For that matter, the title of the book doesn't really fit either. But that does not really matter when reading.

Overall I enjoyed it.

Rick Davis says

The way I rate Star Trek books is according to how well the author writes the characters and how well the spirit of the series comes through. This book felt like a really good episode of the original series.

Jason Cross says

Ended to quickly

M. Milner says

A little overwritten perhaps, and the back cover gives away literally 200 pages of plot, but on the whole it's a horror-tinged, claustrophobic story that's decent and better than average Trek novel fare.

John Chevalier says

Interesting info about Romulan space station. I'm a little puzzled as to how an entire space station was about to get so close to Federation borders without a sensor net detecting it, but overall this was a great book.

Mike Crate says

The Romulan Star Empire goes against grain by building it's first large scale permanent space station outside

of their home system, later the same station is found drifting on the Federation side of the neutral zone. The Enterprise comes across this large mysterious station, no signs of life and a landing party is beamed over. There seems to be only minimal life support but like the ghostly tales that Scotty entertained the crew with the question remains, where did the crew go?

Power to the landing parties equipment begins to fluctuate and a sense of foreboding and not being alone affects them, then the body is found and did something move in the darkness?

Shell Game is lightweight but entertaining yarn using tried and true tropes but within the Star Trek setting. There are certainly elements in the story that any fan of the show will recognise but that's not always a bad thing yet you are left thinking there should have been more meat to the story. On the flipside this would have been a good original series tv episode, make of that what you will :)

Kenneth says

Great story, God-awful dialogue.
