

## Women at Warp Episode 75: Book Club: Rogue Saucer

Sue: Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp, a Roddenberry Star Trek podcast. Join us as our crew of four women Star Trek fans boldly go on our bi weekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name is Sue and thanks for tuning in. With me today are crewmembers Jarrah...

Jarrah: Hello!

Sue: and Andi!

Andi: Hello.

Sue: And today we have a book club episode. We're going to be discussing Next Generation number thirty-nine, *Rogue Saucer* by John Vornholt, I'm assuming is that pronunciation?

Jarrah: Yes. And as Grace said, I believe when we announced this, no this is not the novel about Neelix "rogue saucier".

Andi: When I looked it up on Amazon I kept getting like, BBQ sauces. They kept trying to sell me sauce and I was like, that's not what I want.

Sue: When we announced it we got a lot of great wordplay comments. But first we have a little bit of housekeeping, as usual. We want to remind you about our Patreon on our show was entirely funded by Patreon. Patreon has been in the news a little bit recently about their fee changes but they have decided they are not going to roll out those changes. So for the time being we are sticking with Patreon, and you can become a patron for as little as one dollar per month, with no additional fees, and get awesome rewards from thanks on social media to watch-a-long commentaries and we've even been talking about some new ones that we might have in the works. So if you're interested in becoming a patron you can visit us at [patreon.com/womenatwarp](https://patreon.com/womenatwarp) and you can also support us by leaving a rating or review on Apple podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts.

Andi: And Patreon should know that they're on my list, and that they are on probation, and they need to step very carefully for a little while, here now.

Sue: Yeah we will be keeping a close eye on what's going on over at Patreon.

Andi: You guys can't see it but I'm making the gesture where I point to my eyes and like, "I'm watching you! I'm watching you Patreon!"

Jarrah: Yes you're going to be like Garak on Patreon's promenade.

Andi: It's so true. It's so true.

Sue: Do we have any other housekeeping to touch on today?

Jarrah: I don't believe so.

Sue: I think the only other bit might be happy New Year to everyone listening to this as it comes out.

Andi: Hope your hangover isn't too bad!

Sue: So let's get started. *Rogue Saucer*. Does anybody want to give a quick summary?

Jarrah and Andi, in unison: The saucer goes rogue.

[laughter]

Sue: Thanks guys. Thanks.

Andi: I mean, where is the lie Sue?

Sue: Not, no.

Jarrah: Okay so the ship is the *Enterprise D*. They're going on shore leave because the ship has been damaged, particularly the saucer section has been damaged, in a fight with the Maquis. And they arrive at this starbase, but then who should show up but Admiral Nechayev. And she goes, "This is a perfect opportunity to try this new prototype saucer that we have that can land on planets" and Picard says, "That sounds really dumb." and she says, "It's definitely not really dumb and me and my aide Henry Fulton are going to take some of your crew and we're going to go test this out." But then things go awry from there.

Andi: Shenanigans!

Sue: Yes, so it's set very shortly after the TNG episode *Preemptive Strike* the last one where we get Ro.

Jarrah: Yup, The Architect.

Sue: Yes, who is never actually named in the book as The Architect but it very clearly implied to be Ro. By the way, spoilers at this point. But, the book was published in March of '96 and that's two years after *Next Gen* ended and a year and a half after *Generations* and it just is so funny to me how they keep saying, "Well, the saucer was designed to be able to crash land if needed." And like, just... Guinan even at one point like, doesn't mention the Nexus but she's about to. So

there is all of these things where they're trying to tie it into *Generations* a year and a half later. And I just think it's really funny.

Jarrah: Yeah, it kind of made me wonder whether John Vornholt got the idea from *Generations* or whether this was an idea that he had that could have worked for an episode that just never panned out.

Sue: It is mentioned in *Voyages of Imagination* and the technical manual that he got the idea from studying the saucer section and the landing capabilities from the technical manual.

Andi: Alright. Props to him for reading a technical manual I guess? Something I would never do.

Sue: That's as much as we know. We don't always get a lot of background for the inspiration for the tie-in novels.

Jarrah: I have the technical manual sitting here on my bookshelf. I have had it since like... grade five. I do not think I have opened it. Purely here for cred. Someone walks into my study they'll be like, "Oh, you must know your *Star Trek*."

Sue: I also thought it was pretty funny. There's just one throwaway line where one of the characters says, "Well maybe Starfleet and the Maquis can work side by side after all!" and it's three months after *Voyager* premiered as well as when this was published.

Jarrah: There's a lot of like, entertaining throwaway lines in this book and some of them that are clearly like, a little bit fan-servicey? Just like got something the fans have always been thinking like, there's a part at the end where they... I think Guinan says that the hull section looks silly without the saucer. And like everyone been thinking it? Something like that. The Architect, who's Ro, it turns out, is kind of behind this whole scheme to disable the *Enterprise* and then kidnap the prototype saucer and unite it with the hull section so that they basically have a galaxy class starship for the Maquis that they can use to destroy this Cardassian colony.

Andi: Yeah, it's really ruthless. From top to bottom the whole plan is very ruthless.

Jarrah: Although she's like, "Don't kill any Starfleet people! Only Cardassians!"

Andi: Yeah, right. Like that's going to happen. I feel like that's an order you give knowing that it's not ever going to be practical but like, it'll make you feel better.

Jarrah: Yeah. I mean I'm sure... yeah. Ro is an interesting sort of character on the periphery of this book and it must be hard for her to reconcile the reasons that she supported Starfleet for the reasons that she is supporting the Maquis when like, there's definitely some tension there.

Andi: Yeah. There were a handful of times where it seems like she almost regrets her choice but feels like she has kind of gone too far? To go back, and she still believes in her mission but she misses her old life, kind of.

Sue: It makes me wonder more about Ro's backstory. Because if she was in Starfleet Academy and then on the *Enterprise*, what we later learn about Bajor is that they were in the occupation. So somehow she avoided that and was able to go to Starfleet Academy?

Jarrah: It does explain it in the Terok Nor books but I forget exactly what it says because we actually see her in those books as like a teenager fighting in the resistance so I don't know if it... I believe that someone sort of encourages her to leave and get involved with Starfleet but I might be wrong about that it's been a while.

Andi: Well, Wiley? Also known as "Blue Moon", which is the silliest code name I've ever heard, but whatever.

Jarrah: Sillier than "Peacock"?

Andi: Yeah, yeah, true, true. Neither of them really picked any good names here.

Sue: But how accurate is Peacock though?

Jarrah: "The Architect" is definitely the coolest name.

Andi: Yeah, definitely. But he says at one point that he's surprised that they allowed a Bajoran to get so high ranking in Starfleet. And I don't know if he just means like, general racism? Or if it just really is surprising because of how long they were allowed to go to the academy? Like, there's... It's interesting. I'm not entirely sure what he meant by that.

Sue: Well, they're not a Federation world yet either.

Jarrah: Yeah, that's true and there's definitely like some people who feel that they're too backwards, we know by this point, to be in the Federation because of their religion although that doesn't as much apply to Ro.

Sue: But you could also make the argument that maybe Ro is taking this opportunity to fight the Cardassians because she left and didn't fight when she went to Starfleet Academy.

Jarrah: Interesting.

Sue: I don't know. There's a lot of speculation there.

Jarrah: I don't think we really find out why Henry Fulton joins the Marquis.

Andi: Oh sure we do. He's a douche.

[laughter]

Jarrah: Pretty much. He wants to be in charge.

Sue: Well, he claims to be so many different things each time. He claims to be Starfleet, he claims to be Maquis, he claims to be a double agent for both. So basically he's a douche.

Jarrah: Yes. He seems really power hungry and not particularly acting on principles but like he's sick of being like second in to Nechayev even though he hasn't been around for that long.

Andi: Yeah, and I feel like he is "classic mediocre dude who is like, mad that he's mediocre."

Sue: 100 percent.

Andi: And sees this as an opportunity to be awesome. And of course he biffs it because he sucks.

Sue: Well, he even says to Nechayev at one point that he realizes that Starfleet is never going to promote him. Like, he realizes he's mediocre, at least in the eyes of Starfleet.

Andi: Well, Starfleet was right.

[laughter]

Andi: That was the correct decision on Starfleet's part. They should have just gotten rid of him a long time ago.

Sue: And he's just so reactionary and vengeful.

Andi: Yeah, there's a point where he thinks Geordi died? He like cackles like a cartoonishly evil cackle. "Geordi's dead! He fell down an elevator shaft! Muahhahahahahahah!"

Jarrah: If people didn't read the book yet but you still want to go ahead and you're listening to this episode? We have a situation... basically Riker and Geordi and Nechayev are on the rogue saucer with the Maquis. Picard and Data and some other not super important people are on the hull section and trying to get back the saucer section but they're damaged and then a bit later Troi and Crusher and Guinan in come on the original saucer to try and save the day. So that's who's where.

Sue: So the set up. It all starts with the *Enterprise* going into Starbase 211 to get some short leave and then Admiral Nechayev pulls a few people to go on this special mission. And we get these scenes where it looks like Crusher and Troi are being specifically left out and they figure it out and they go to confront Picard and he's like, "I'm just trying to preserve your shore leave." Which, whatever. There are issues, certainly, with that. But then you have Crusher, I'm not sure if she says it or she thinks it, but it's bringing up basically that still the people who Picard is taking on this mission are the ones that are the most overworked on the ship.

Andi: It's true.

Jarrah: I mean it's hard. I have mixed feelings about this because it's partly just a problem of the way *Next Generation* was set up, because... in terms of who you would pick. It does make sense to have your engineering people and your tactical people first? I guess Worf is around there too but he's on the hull section right?

Andi: Yeah, he's with Picard.

Jarrah: I feel like him and Data don't... they actually get, I think, less memorable stuff to do than Crusher and Troi.

Sue: True, but I mean still think that if you're intentionally crashing a saucer section onto a planet you would want a medical officer.

Jarrah: That is true. Crusher definitely would have made... it made sense to ask Crusher. I think probably Troi didn't make a ton of sense although she was a bridge officer, commander by that point.

Andi: Can we take a moment and discuss their shore leave? Cause I think it's hilarious.

Jarrah: Yes, it is.

Andi: First of all, he like writes a little shore leave scene for all of them and their various scenes are so funny, like Riker's trying to hit on a Deltan, like you do, and like Crusher gets like some spa stuff and Troi goes and clears out a bunch of dudes for their poker money and it's just so funny to me. Like what people chose to do with their shore leave. And of course Picard was like super pumped to go look at like, museum and study the archaeology and it's just... I just found that so delightful. The things he chose for their various shore leave.

Jarrah: Yeah, I thought it was funny although the Riker like, wanting to hit on a Deltan thing was like, a little skeezy the way it was described as like, "Oh, she's a Deltan!" it was again one of those really like, you know, biological determinism things that like it must be the most incredible sex ever because she's a Deltan and it's like, ehrrrrr.

Sue: Yeah, it was like if you get one to fall in love with you... it was gross. But also so was Troi's scene. There was a lot of sexism in Troi's scene.

Andi: But she used it, which I enjoy.

Jarrah: She's like, "What, me? I don't know poker!"

Andi: "Poke her? I barely knew her."

Sue: "Golly gee!"

[laughter]

Sue: But yeah, then Troi and Crusher get to kind of come to the rescue and they bring Guinan with them. But there's this weird little bit that seemed unnecessary that the captain of the starbase goes and talks to Crusher and says, "So you'll command the saucer section?" And she says yes and they talk about her choosing people for this mission and then she shows up on the bridge to find Troi in the center seat, who I'm assuming did not also choose a crew for this mission. And Troi was like, "I just assumed I was going to be the captain."

Jarrah: Yeah, that was weird. It just seemed like that wouldn't actually happen. And I don't think Troi would have been weird and territorial about it either.

Andi: She wasn't though, they were like, "Oh, well who should command?" And she thought about it and she's like, "You should. You have more experience."

Sue: Right but, shouldn't she know she's not commanding when she's not choosing the crew?

Andi: I don't know.

Sue: She just showed up to the bridge and everybody was there, she was like, "Okay, great."

Andi: "I'm in charge." She was still riding that poker high.

Sue: Maybe. Definitely she said, "You have more experience, I'll be First Officer." So I mean, it didn't turn into any kind of fight but it was still... it felt strange and unnecessary in some ways.

Andi: I also liked that she ended up at tactical. That's pretty awesome.

Jarrah: Yeah. And then Guinan's like bringing them coffee on the bridge. And I also thought it was... are you allowed to have coffee on the bridge? No? I'm pretty sure like people occasionally. I mean maybe that's just the thing that changed from the days of Kirk when the yeomans went extinct. There was no coffee to be had on the bridge. But it seems weird that it

would be like, disallowed at all times like, I mean I get, you know, you don't want hot drinks around if there's going to be a battle but...

Andi: I mean, Sulu sits on the bridge and sips tea, man.

Sue: And then there are shards of porcelain, ceramic on the floor after the battle.

Jarrah: I'm just saying I think they should be allowed coffee. They should be allowed coffee.

Sue: But I don't think I've ever seen anyone with a beverage on the bridge of the *Enterprise D*.

Jarrah: You might be right.

Sue: Maybe it's just a Picard rule.

Andi: Well, remember that time when that woman dumped hot chocolate on Picard?

[laughter]

Sue: That's why!

Andi: He probably made a rule after that.

Sue: "That's it! No more beverages!"

Jarrah: It's just like, classic male privilege where he's just like, he can go into his ready room and drink his "tea, Earl Grey, hot" but no one else is allowed to.

Andi: Oh, but this time, because he was feeling a little unsettled, he went with "chamomile, lukewarm."

Jarrah: That was classy? Lukewarm, man. That's not a thing that you generally aim for but okay.

Andi: Can I say something to you about the descriptions? Cause once we got into that the actual like, battle stuff I stopped noticing them. But like the first quarter of this book they were really making me laugh, like at one point... At one point he describes Bev's eyes as a "velvety green".

Sue: Oh no! Ronin's still here!

[laughter]

Andi: It was just a super funny.



Jarrah: Yeah, I noticed that. And the part where like Troi has the nice dress on and they're all noticing the fact that she has a nice dress on. This is something that we talked about in other books that we've looked at before this. This feeling from particularly male authors that you need to remind us that the women are attractive and like what they look like, that's why we're often reading to TOS books you'll hear people refer to Uhura as like, Nubian or dark skinned and in that case it's like very racialized but people will also talk about like her long slender fingers or her deep jet black eyes or you know, things like that and same with this. It's like Troi's hair, Crusher's eyes, but they aren't being like Riker: his goatee of masculinity!

Andi: His rippling pecs.

Sue: Well, actually he called Riker big, a lot.

Andi: Yeah, he did! There is actually a point where Nechayev was like, "You're big, just knock it down." That made me laugh so hard, I was dying.

Sue: But I did notice that especially in the spa scene with Crusher and Guinan where they talked a lot about hair. And he also made note of course of her "slim waist" when she used her towel.

Andi: I did like the Vulcan comes in and like tells her she's in command and she doesn't bother to get out of the spa. That's a power move.

Sue: She was naked!

Andi: She was like, "Yeah I'm naked but... it's probably fine. He's Vulcan." It was hilarious.

Jarrah: Yeah I enjoyed that.

Andi: That's a Lwaxana Troi move right there, that's what that is.

Sue: So I have one more quick note about beverages. No, seriously. Because it was so weird is why I remember it, at the very end when they're beaming up the injured after all this business has gone down Crusher turns to Guinan and says, "Get them some hot apple cider."

[laughter]

Andi: To be fair after a rough day. I like apple cider. But, I'm from Michigan so that's one of our go tos.

Sue: I mean apple cider is wonderful, but it's very specific. Like they're shivering, they're cold, they've been in ice water. And it's not, "get them something hot to drink" it's "get them some hot apple cider."

Jarrah: She's like, "If I was them, what would I want to drink right now? I know!" That's like how she decides.

Andi: Well then, I would have gotten them hot chocolate with whipped cream vodka in it.

Jarrah: Like, "Where's my half sweet peppermint mocha!?"

Andi: Mint mocha with two shots of raspberry.

Jarrah: Other than the shore leave stuff...

Andi: So they leave shore leave and that's when we kind of get like these three separate perspectives, which I think worked. At least, I liked moving between the perspectives. And one thing that I think worked really well with setting it up like this is you're wondering most of the time what Picard's going to do because you know what's happening but Picard doesn't. So there's a whole thing where Douchebag McGee, what's his name? Peacock? Fulton. I like Douchebag McGee better. But anyways he is like cackling and he is like, "Alright. So what we're going to do..." What they did and I actually think it's pretty funny, what they did is they stole the saucer which nothing will ever make that not funny. They stole the saucer and went into a dust cloud and they're going to try and trick Picard into coming into the dust cloud and reattaching the hull and the saucer and then they'll take over the hull and then they'll have the ship.

Sue: Yeah, but that was not the original plan, the original plan was that they wouldn't be able to defeat the simulation virus and they would just like go back later when the hull was drifting and pick it up.

Andi: Sucks for him that Worf is awesome.

Sue: Yeah, that was really... this sounds terrible, that was really smart for Worf?

Andi: Yeah I mean if you're asking who is going to overcome an evil virusy simulation they're all trapped in and you've got Data, Picard and Worf there? Worf's not the one that's your go to, at least not for me. But hey it worked. He got his hero moment. But yeah. So what I mean though is that, I think added a lot of tension? Which was really fun. Because you were like, "Picard's smart, he'll probably figure this out." I mean they really took it right to the wire because at this point Geordi and Riker have escaped, which their whole escape scene was pretty great too. It reminded me of, you know that, episode where where they go to Romulan and Sela locks Data and Spock in her office with all the computers and is like, "This will be fine." Basically they do the same thing, the Maquis do the same thing. They're like, "OK we're going to put three top

Starfleet officers in a room alone and that'll be fine." And it's like, not even two minutes later and Geordi has like, opened a panel and is like running away in the Jefferies tubes and stuff. It was so great.

Sue: But even when they do escape, they're not worried about it. They're like, "They're unarmed it'll be fine."

[laughter]

Jarrah: Yeah, they're like, "Ehhh, we'll deal with them."

Andi: God, I loved this book. I'm not even going to front. I really liked it, it was really funny and fun to read and yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah, like the Maquis, their first step is not like, like they take some steps that make more sense later for like how to flush them out but originally they like just send one guy after them to beat them up. That sounds like that will work. They clearly weren't looking at how big Riker was.

Sue: Almost as big as the big Bajoran.

Andi: Beefy! The beefy Bajoran.

Sue: That kept being described as big. The first time I read this book I found it in a used bookstore on the way to my aunt's house one summer and I read it cover to cover in the back seat of the family car on the way to summer vacation.

Jarrah: Nice.

Sue: And I loved it and I actually don't think I read it all the way through since then. But that's why I picked this one and made you guys read this book. So I'm glad you had fun with it because, it just lived in my memory like, "this was great book."

Andi: I mean you had me at runaway saucer. Right?

Jarrah: I mean it's... even though you theoretically could have pulled this off in an episode it's obviously like a lot more action oriented than most TNG episodes and more like space battle-y the whole way through and I thought it was really fun and fast paced and just generally entertaining.

Andi: I especially like it when Riker kneecapped a guy.

Sue: So, there is actually a semi serious ethical thing I want to talk about?

Andi: Nah, kneecapping's fine, man.

Jarrah: Before we get into the ethical things though, can we talk about Nechayev a bit? Because Nechayev's like, a big role in this book. And I feel like there's... like, it's a little bit mixed the way that she's represented. Starting with on the starbase when she shows up and basically Picard it's just like, "this is literally the worst thing that could happen to me."

Sue: Right, they're portrayed as very antagonistic and like... Always in the novels it seems like it's a much more strained relationship than it did on the show to me. She's clearly not his favorite person but like, they didn't hate each other. Am I wrong?

Jarrah: No. I thought it was a little over the top too. It almost felt like the tone in the book felt like Picard not just hated Nechayev but probably at the poker games like sat down and was like, "Hey crew, Nechayev, am I right?" and everyone is just like, "Ugh, she's the worst." Because you get that sense from other people too that they don't want to be around her.

Andi: Which is weird because she's kind of awesome in this book.

Jarrah: Yeah. And so then I was like, well, I like how awesome she gets later on but it was... it did feel like overly antagonistic to me at the beginning.

Sue: But the reasons that they give for disliking her is...

Andi: Crap?

Sue: She demands perfection. Like, that's not a bad thing.

Andi: She's tough and requires people to be competent. [sarcastically] Oh no! That's not how I want my admirals to be! [normal tone] Of course I've always loved Nechayev so I have such a soft spot for her. She's the only Admiral I've ever liked. Well, Cornwell now, but...

Jarrah: I think that the way that they sort of expressed frustration with Nechayev is... it's about her demanding perfection but also refusing... I guess, snatching defeat from the jaws of victory? That like, they feel they've succeeded on these missions. But all she can see are the things that went wrong. Which I get that but like, I mean, I think that that is a dynamic that makes sense and you know people will be familiar with that from like workplaces or things of having like, senior people swoop in and not really understand how things work day to day on the ground. But I thought it was just a little much at the beginning how irritated people seemed to be. But later on she gets kind of awesome.

Andi: Yeah, definitely. She's so awesome that the Bajoran guy, the non-douche guy? He's actually sitting there like, "I like her."

Jarrah: Yeah, she basically tells Picard to blow up the saucer with all of them on it.

Andi: I know! It's so hardcore! Man, I dig her.

Jarrah: And she helps Riker and Geordi escape the ready room.

Sue: Well, because the stakes are upped when she realizes they're going to crash on the inhabited planet.

Jarrah: Yep.

Sue: Or does she give that order even before that happens?

Andi: She gives it before but she is like, really... the tension is amped way up once they're about to break the Prime Directive.

Jarrah: Yeah, but like, even before that I think she's worried about just the technology falling into the wrong hands so she wants them to destroy the saucer rather than let the Maquis get it. Because she's obviously you know got an axe to grind with Fulton and the Maquis.

Andi: Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah, I mean throughout the whole thing she's just super badass.

Andi: I will say though, that considering they spend so much time especially Fulton, Douchebag McGee, spend so much time talking about how she never does what anybody wants and she's tough as nails and blah blah blah and then he puts her on the view screen and is like, "do what I say or I'll kill you." like, shockingly! Shockingly, everyone is shocked when she's like, "Nah, blow this ship up with everybody on it." and he's like, "whhhhhhaaaattt!???" and I'm like, really? That was the most obvious thing she could have ever done. I guess it's just probably because he would have never done that so he doesn't even like, comprehend that somebody else would have a higher concern than their own life? But still. I was like, ok dude. Good job. You suck.

Jarrah: Agreed. It is like, mildly disappointing that she gets punched unconscious and then like spends the rest of the book mostly unconscious, but. She apologizes to Picard at the end in a nice way but then he's also like, "I'm also sorry." It's very Canadian. I was like, "I understand this. They're both sorry."

Andi: Did it speak to your Canadian soul?

Jarrah: Yeah. "I'm sorry. No, I'm sorry." But ethics!

Sue: Okay.

Andi: Kneecapping! And murder!

Sue: I marked this in the book. Okay, so again at the very end, a lot of the Maquis have died but the Cardassians left and they took Fulton with them. And Picard is talking to Geordi, who is still on the planet, and it's literally written, "Geordi thought about the snivelling traitor who had caused so much death and destruction. Was there punishment to fit the crime? Probably not, under Federation statutes." And then he says to Picard, "The Cardassians did capture one Maquis, but I doubt if he'll live long enough to be rescued. I don't think it's worth going to war over." and Picard says, "Then we'll let it end here." So already they know... Geordi doesn't specify that it's Fulton but they know that the Cardassians have one of the Maquis. Literally the next scene? Is the Cardassians torturing him, and then a few pages later in sickbay Picard's talking to Nechayev and she asks where Fulton is. And Picard says, "As far as we know, he perished with the other Maquis in the battle with the Cardassians." So, straight up lies.

Jarrah: Yeah I mean first of all, I was surprised. I mean like, I like Geordi but I don't know that he is a political decision maker and that is like, a big decision to decide whether you're going to pursue the Cardassians or not. And maybe Picard would want to know a little bit more information before just being like, "Yeah, Geordi probably knows what he's talking about."

Andi: Yeah? I mean, I was fine with it. I mean if we were talking about real life I would definitely side-eye that decision. But whatever, he sucked. Let him I'm die in Cardassian jail, I'm fine with it.

Jarrah: It seemed like they were. But there's also a difference between 'the guy died with the Cardassians', 'the Cardassians killed him after torturing him, and it's possible he knew a lot of sensitive information.'

Andi: That's true. See, that's where you got me, you got me at tactics.

Sue: Because this was also the guy who was the assistant to Nechayev.

Jarrah: Yeah. No, I don't feel any sympathy for the dude, I'm just like, you might have actually wanted to at least be more honest with people about what the threat might been that the information he possessed went to the Cardassians.

Andi: Meh.

Jarrah: I mean, or the Maquis even, like how much had he been telling the Maquis? And everyone's just kind of like, "I guess, yeah, you know it's fine he's dead."

Andi: He apparently doesn't know who the Architect is which is good.

Jarrah: That's true.

Sue: Nobody does. That's why they use code names, Andi!

Andi: Peacock and Blue Moon.

[laughter]

Jarrah: Right? And Linda. How did Linda not get a code name?

Andi: Yeah. Poor Linda. Maybe Linda is her code name.

Sue: Because she's pretty.

Andi: What would my code name be? Polar bear.

Sue: Tweeter.

Andi: Tweeter!? Well, Blue Moon just makes me think of ice cream. I just find that to be the weirdest code name. I just picture a big tub of ice cream. These guys make some decisions that I would not make. Let's put it that way.

Jarrah: Well, I was also a little bit bothered by the way... like, Linda dies. And they're like, "Well it wasn't our fault. You're the ones that stuck us with these disruptors that kill people."

[laughter]

Andi: This book was awesome. This exchange is amazing. So they're like, first of all, Blue Moon and Peacock...

Sue: If we had some non-lethal weapons, guys!

Andi: Seriously Blue Moon and Peacock, because I'm going to make them use their code names if they're going to give it to each other such terrible code names. They have decided, OK we're totally screwed. Instead of like just giving up we're going to go that final route and break the Prime Directive and we're going to crash land on this planet and ruin their entire civilization. And Linda's like, "No, man. I'm not doing that. That sucks." And there's a moment where Blue Moon is like, "Yeah, I respect that. And then he goes, "Okay, Go find the Starfleet guys that kneecapped other friend earlier, by yourself, go do that." And then shockingly, they kill her, like Geordi and Riker get the best of the one person that they sent after them and they call and they're like, "Um, sorry we killed her." I can't get over this. They're like, "Sorry we killed her." And they're like, "How dare you!"

Jarrah: I think they say like, "Unfortunately the young woman is dead."

Sue: Well, they didn't know her name. At least they didn't call her a girl.

Andi: And then Riker legit is just like, "What did you expect us to do? You sent her alone and all we have are disruptors like, we can't stun her. Sucks."

Jarrah: We can't. No one was going to punch her.

Andi: I mean he could a kneecapped another person. [laughing] But I just love that that he got so like, "what did you expect me to do?"

Jarrah: Yeah, that was a little weird.

Andi: So funny. I died laughing.

Jarrah: Then there's also the part where Geordi gets trapped in the turbo lift that was kind of entertaining, and that he's afraid of turbo lifts?

Andi: Geordi is kind of *Die Hard*-y in this book, no lie. Like, first he escapes. Riker and Nechayev don't escape, they all escape one by one instead of like all at once. So Geordi gets away and then he beams Riker away and then they manage to beam Nechayev away later. But I just think it's so funny. Like most of the time Geordi is just like rocking out by himself in the dark because why not?

Jarrah: And he has a run in with a caveman.

Sue: Oh yeah that's right. Who's terrified of his eyes.

Jarrah: Yeah, that seems like that's right out of the Starfleet playbook, right? Like when you accidentally encounter a primitive civilization what you should really do is scare them with advanced technology.

Sue: If someone asks you if you're a god you say yes. Wait, wrong franchise.

Jarrah: Clearly people are going to go back to that planet in like a few hundred years and they're all going to be worshipping an idol of Geordi.

Andi: I just love that he is like, "People always seem to react when I take off my visor so it must look scary. I better do it right now." Well hey, it worked. Geordi is the only one who walks away from that. Of all of all the Maquis that crash land on that planet, literally Geordi is the only one



who... and at one point at one point, he just runs away. He's just like, "BYYYYYeeeeee!" and he just runs off into the woods. It's amazing.

Jarrah: That part's great. I kind of love Geordi in this book. Meanwhile, like, Riker and Nechayev are getting terrorized by sea monsters. To the point that Nechayev is curled up in the fetal position when they transport her.

Andi: Nothing that some hot cider won't fix, okay?

Sue: Can we also talk about Picard's "lady and that tiger" scenario?

[laughter]

Andi: I have to say this before we go any farther. You picked a banger of a book. I'm not going to lie. It was fun as hell. All right, let's talk about "lady and the tiger."

Sue: So the saucers are apparently flying through space next to each other and they look identical. And the Maquis one is jamming the sensors and Crusher's commanding one of the Maquis have the other, and Picard's like, "It's the lady or the tiger!" Worf's like, "What are you talking about?" And like Picard goes on this long extended storytelling thing about how if you pick the door with, first of all why is the lady behind a door? But if you pick the door with the lady behind it you get to marry her. And if you pick the other one, you have to fight a tiger to the death.

[laughter]

Andi: Such a good story. Such a good story.

Sue: So he fires phasers on both saucers.

Andi: Well the best part, is Worf is like, "Do it the Klingon way. Shoot at everyone!" and Picard's like, "Solid. Solid advice. Let's go for that."

Sue: But I do really love when he's face to face with Crusher again and he's like, "I'm so happy to see you!" and she says, "Happy enough to hold your fire?"

Andi: He's like, "My bad. So sorry about that."

Jarrah: And they were saying like, they should make Guinan a bridge officer. She's like, "I don't like the uniforms."

Sue: They also made a joke about her hats. Like, she was late for shore because she was trying to choose which hats to bring?

Jarrah: What did you think of the beginning part where the Maquis guy sleeps with Ro?

Andi: [surprised noise]

Sue: Oh yeah.

Jarrah: The part where like, you know the guy goes to see the Architect... was it Wiley?

Sue: It's Blue Moon.

Jarrah: Okay, that's what I thought. So he goes to see the Architect. And like basically get the information about what they're going to do and he ends up sleeping with her.

Andi: Oh, I did not catch that at all.

Jarrah: Yeah. But he's like totally like in thrall.

Sue: The only time it's really brought up is when he's leaving. Yeah, like the scene afterwards is like he woke up and she's sending him on a mission.

Andi: Oh yeah, I completely missed that they banged.

Jarrah: But it feels like she's almost like, mythical. Like she's so amazing.

Andi: Well, she is pretty amazing.

Jarrah: I mean I was kind of down with it actually, I was like, wow she's pretty powerful.

Andi: Yeah, I mean I definitely noticed that he was in love with her. I just didn't realize it was reciprocated in any way. I mean she probably didn't love him.

Sue: I think only in the physical way.

Andi: She was just probably lonely.

Jarrah: It's like, "Wiley felt a pang in his heart for this beautiful young woman. He wanted to wrap her in his arms and assure her there would be a happy ending to their trials. But he didn't know if that was truly the case."

Andi: What a douche. Like, I can't... no. Bye, bro. I just... when you meet a really powerful woman if your response is like, you want to protect her that really creeps me out, to be honest. It's really patronizing. But, one thing though about him and about everyone in the book except

for Peacock, Douchebag McGee, is they all had like, grey? And like, they all had motivations that made some sense and a lot of them were like, questioning those motivations? But like, ultimately deciding that they had made the right choice for the most part and the only one that really was irredeemable was Fulton which is probably why I didn't care at all that he ended up getting tortured with Ferengi pain whips or whatever they were. Which by the way, hilarious.

Sue: Truly his only motivation was power.

Andi: Yeah, like personal... and at one point like, they even say that to him, and they're like, "Wait. So you did this for personal gain?" He was like, "Nu-uh. It's because of Starfleet!" But it totally wasn't! It was for personal gain.

Sue: He even goes on a rant when they're all tied up saying like, "They won't let me command a ship but now I can command any ship! I could command the *Enterprise* now that I'm Maquis!"

Andi: Yeah, okay bro.

Sue: Totally all about rising the hypothetical ranks.

Jarrah: It could have been worse he could have swapped bodies with Captain Picard though.

Sue: "They'll never let me be Captain! It's because I'm a dude!"

[laughter]

Andi: But yeah, like that's one thing I really did truly like about this book is like, I thought that he did a good job of setting up that everyone's motivations were complicated and everybody was spending time wondering whether they were doing the right thing. And I mean even the Starfleet people because they're sitting there like, "Should we be helping? Should we be helping Cardassians at the expense of our own colonists?" And like, that's the strength of the Maquis storyline anyway? Because like, Starfleet made this huge decision that doesn't sit right with so many people, it doesn't even really sit right with most of Starfleet, which is why they have so many people leaving and joining the Maquis and I just thought that that was well done. I liked a lot of the internal monologues, especially from Wiley, he was probably the best on that where he was just like, "Am I doing the right thing?"

Jarrah: I don't know though, that I really bought that they would feel so much remorse at the end of it. That like, Geordi would go out of his way to send a message? Just given like, what the Maquis had just put them through? And the attitude toward the Maquis by like the people on Deep Space Nine and stuff by this point?

Sue: Yeah, I still think that... you know it's a whole ship of people who lost their lives. So if they can get official word back to someone, you might as well.

Jarrah: Yeah. It just seemed like he was like, "Look I'm not saying you guys are Maquis but like if you were you should tell them!" I don't know. I just was like, I feel like the issue is a little bit more serious than that that you might get shit for that. But. I don't know. He clearly does think they're Maquis or at least that they might be able to...

Sue: Well they're heading into the DMZ.

Andi: Considering they built Ro up as like this tactically brilliant officer in this book, that's like really doing a lot of damage to the Cardassians, she really gets her ass handed to her in this book.

Sue: Well, it's Fulton, really.

Andi: Yeah, but it was her plan. I actually... to be honest, why wasn't she there running it?

Sue: Because they know her.

Jarrah: Well and she's like the leader. You know, she's hoping for this to not be her only and last plan right?

Andi: Yeah, but like if Wiley could get there she could get there. It just seems like she built up this plan that was really... intricate. And then sent a douchebag like Fulton? And Wiley was like not a totally bad guy but he also wasn't a very good leader. They were pretty incompetent. Linda was the only one that didn't totally suck when it came to the competence part. And even she got shot in the face by Riker. So. I don't know. It just it feels weird that she was like the architect of this whole plan. And then she let it play out where she didn't even know if they succeeded or not and then in the end she lost her base of operations. So there was no wins for her.

Sue: Well, in some cases I think... in a situation like Maquis is in you have to work what you got. Fulton has to be involved because of the position that he has in Starfleet. If she's leading this entire Maquis cell, isn't it irresponsible to go off and do this mission because what if you don't come back?

Andi: Mmm, I don't know. I just feel like Ro could have pulled it off.

Sue: Probably. But even how the Cardassians found out is that the people on the saucer and in the Pakled freighter were using old encryption codes so the Cardassians had broken them. So like, the bad decision making, and the errors were all from the people on that mission.

Andi: Yeah. You just can't get any good help around here I guess.

Jarrah: Well, and I mean, she knows by the end that like she's been really defeated on this issue and has to regroup.

Sue: But overall I feel like they could have done a lot more with the Maquis in all of *Star Trek*. Like it feels like they were just created to get some conflict going for *Voyager* and then they didn't even really use that conflict a whole lot. And in *DS9* they are just like, "We need something else." and they moved on to the Dominion War. Like there's a lot more of that, like, political tension and discord that they could have dealt with. Or maybe it just feels that way to me now because it's sort of like we're living in it.

Jarrah: Yeah, there's definitely more that could have been done. And I think this book kind of shows that, that there's potential there to explore you know the tensions between the Maquis too as well as between the Maquis and Federation.

Sue: Right. Because you've got ex-Federation you've got people who've never been part of the Federation. You've got people who were just colonists and are now in the middle of it.

Jarrah: Yeah, it makes total sense that some people would care really passionately about the Prime Directive like well, "I wasn't abandoning the Prime Directive. I just didn't believe Federation was right about this one thing," but then other people like, "Why should I care about their rules? Their rules are terrible because they caused... it's like a terrible system."

Andi: Yeah, it's interesting. Like, so much this book is kind of silly but it really does bring up a lot of tensions within Starfleet.

Jarrah: They just need better codenames, guys.

[laughter]

Andi: Yeah, definitely.

Jarrah: I mean, they should have just been called Douchebag McGee and Mustache.

Andi: Yes! Those would've been better names, definitely.

Sue: I'm glad you guys like this book.

Andi: It was so funny.

Jarrah: Entertaining. It was a good holiday read too, I thought. Just like, it was a nice sort of... It was a romp.

Sue: Yes, I definitely remembered it as being fun.

Andi: I also appreciate it how short it was.

Jarrah: Well, cause you read it in a day.

Sue: Well, I mean it's 270 pages. That's about what the numbered TNG novels tend to run. I feel like it's not until the relaunch that they started getting longer.

Jarrah: Well, it was very fast paced. That's cool. So listeners, what should we read next? [long pause] You can tell us at our Goodreads group.

Sue: It's just... the pause, we're like on *Blue's Clues*. "Where is it? Over there!"

Jarrah: I can imagine you listeners all shouting out as I paused just there. Yeah, we have a thread for suggestions for the next book we should read. Or you know or future reading list in our Goodreads group. If you go to [Goodreads.com](https://www.goodreads.com) and search Women at Warp in the group section you can join our book club and take part in the discussion. And it's fun.

Andi: It is fun.

Jarrah: You get to read books like this.

Andi: You get to read romps.

Sue: And sometimes autobiographies and sometimes other stuff.

Andi: Yeah. Good times.

Sue: So does anybody have any final thoughts on *Rogue Saucer*, TNG number 39?

Andi: It was good. I liked it. I'd read it again.

Jarrah: Yup! I might not read it again only because it is in the giant stack of all of the *Star Trek* novels that I have and I would say I read maybe 10 percent of them so we're going to try and read some other ones first. But maybe one day when I am looking back on my failed career as an architect of a revolution and I've had to burn all my other books in my escape from my lair then I'll return to this one.

Andi: Really if Ro had just known that you need a really good song to close out. Bring all the people to revolution. Make sure that you know, they hear the people sing? Singing the songs of angry men.

Sue: Well, the copy I reread for this is the same one I bought in that used bookstore in Delaware, in the late 90's, so. I will definitely read this again at some point although it might take another, I don't know, 20 years. But we'll get there! Alright. So Jarrah, where can people find you on the Internet?

Jarrah: You can find me at [@jarrahpenguin](#) on Twitter.

Sue: And Andi?

Andi: Easiest place to find me is on Twitter, at [@FirstTimeTrek](#) where I'm live tweeting my first time through Star Trek.

Sue: And I'm Sue, you can find me on Twitter at [@spaltor](#). You can also find the show on Twitter at [@WomenAtWarp](#), on Facebook at [facebook.com/womenatwarp](#) or you can get in touch with us by sending us an email to [crew@womenatwarp.com](mailto:crew@womenatwarp.com) and of course find us in Apple podcasts, leave a rating or review, on [Patreon](#), and in all of your favorite podcatchers and for more from the Roddenberry podcast network you can go to [podcasts.rodnenberry.com](#). Thanks for joining us!