

Reboot: The Chase

Posted originally on the [Ad Astra :: Star Trek Fanfiction Archive](http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/33) at <http://www.adastrafanfic.com/works/33>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	Gen
Fandom:	Star Trek: The Next Generation , Stargate: SG-1
Character:	Jean-Luc Picard
Additional Tags:	Crossover , TNG S06E20: The Chase , Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence
Language:	English
Series:	Part 1 of Reboot
Stats:	Published: 2006-08-14 Words: 5,019 Chapters: 1/1

Reboot: The Chase

by [Beatrice Otter](#)

Summary

There's a message written in DNA all across the galaxy--history isn't what we thought it was.

Notes

Based on the challenge by Beneficia

"I'll destroy this entire rock face," Gul Ocett said, disruptor pointed at the rock. "And all traces of DNA with it." She sneered. "You'll go back to Romulus empty-handed. Your superiors will be quite pleased."

Captain Picard closed his eyes briefly. Watching the Cardassians, Romulans, and Klingons square off was so horribly predictable. The greatest scientific puzzle of the last hundred years—quite possibly of the last several billion years, if it came to that—and between them the Cardassians, Klingons, and Romulans had turned it into a bizarre arms race. The Klingons had destroyed all life on Indri Eight to prevent anyone else from getting that piece of the puzzle, and now the Cardassians were preparing to do the same on Vilmoren Two. No one would find out what the long-dead race that had seeded the puzzle in the genetic codes of life-forms across this arm of the galaxy had thought so very important. Professor Galen would have been horrified.

Still, he was a man of action, not an academic. There had to be a way to keep this from degenerating to a worst-case scenario, and the one good thing about all the posturing going on was that no one was paying any attention to him and Doctor Crusher. He glanced at his surroundings hoping for inspiration. And found it. "The sea-bed," he said quietly, noting its color. "It may only be partially fossilized. It could still contain organic material."

Beverly nodded, turning slightly to scrape a sample into her tricorder's analyzer. Off to the side, Gul Ocett joined the Romulans, leaving Worf and Nu'Daq facing six opponents. As no one seemed inclined to start shooting just that second, he turned his attention back to the tricorder. "The program has activated ... I think it's reconfiguring the tricorder. It's modifying the emitter diode to project something."

"We die together, brother," Nu-Daq said to Worf. "Tash-Koh-Tah."

The situation was only seconds away from erupting. Picard pointed his tricorder at the space between the belligerents and activated the program, hoping like hell it would do something impressive enough to get their attention at least momentarily.

A hologram appeared of a blond woman. She appeared human, though given that the program would have to have been created billions of years ago, that was almost certainly misleading. She wore functional black boots, green pants, a black t-shirt, and a green bush jacket with a patch of some sort on each sleeve. "Hello. I am Colonel Samantha Carter of the United States Air Force; I served in Stargate Command, the branch of the Tau'ri—Earth—military dealing with the Stargate, for many years. We tried to save the galaxy, first from the Goa'uld and then from the Ori. We defeated the Goa'uld and the Replicators, but some enemies can't be defeated. The Ori are one of them."

She looked down, seeming to find it hard to speak, but her eyes were clear and dry when she looked up. "I don't know how much knowledge has been retained of galactic history, so here's the basics. Millions of years ago, a group of people called the Alterans came to this galaxy. They settled on Earth, and began seeding the galaxy with life forms similar to their own, though at a substantially lower evolutionary level. The Alterans had left their home galaxy because of a split in their society; those who stayed believed that the life-forms they had created should worship them as gods, while those who left believed that all life-forms should be allowed to develop on their own.

"The two groups fought, and eventually the Ori sent a great plague to wipe out all who would not worship them. It destroyed all life in the

galaxy, so the Alterans set out to recreate their work. They created a device on a world called Dakara that was capable of re-seeding life on all planets with a Stargate simultaneously, and they did so. Humans were the main result."

"Humans!" Gul Ocett snorted. "Obviously, these 'Alterans' had no taste. If it's not some sort of elaborate deception."

Picard ignored that; he was more concerned by the device the colonel had mentioned.

"As time went on," Colonel Carter continued, "the Alterans—whom the Humans called the Ancients—became less and less involved in the affairs of the galaxy. Some Ascended to a higher plane of existence; some died; some assimilated into local human populations. A great deal of technology was left behind, and while much of it was destroyed in the passage of time, the Ancients were great builders and a surprising amount still remains." She winced, slightly. "Or, at least, remained in our time."

"A race of snake-like parasites called the Goa'uld used elements of the Ancient technology to pose as gods and create a feudal empire stretching across most of the galaxy using Humans as slaves, though fortunately they were unable to figure out the more advanced elements of Ancient technology. Around 3,000 BC, Earth rebelled and was able to throw the Goa'uld off the planet, allowing Earth to develop unmolested until we found the Stargate buried at Giza. In the few years after we figured out how to use the Gate, we made many friends and a few enemies, and learned much more about the Ancients and their technology than the Goa'uld had managed in millennia."

Colonel Carter shook her head. "It was too much, too fast. Shortly after the final defeat of the Goa'uld and the destruction of the Replicators, we contacted the Ori by accident. Like the Ancients they, too, have ascended to a higher form of existence, and they still want to be worshipped; they draw power from worship in ways that we haven't managed to figure out. They kill all who will not worship them. The Ascended Ancients of this galaxy do not interfere in mortal affairs, but they had shielded us from the knowledge of the Ori. Once we had made contact, however, that protection was gone."

"The Ori came. Their technology was far beyond ours, and while their worshippers can be killed, we've never figured out how to kill a being that is from a different plane of existence. Within a year, most of the galaxy was either destroyed or worshipping the Ori. We and our allies—including the Free Jaffa—were powerless to stop them."

"But there was one way to ensure that the Ori would leave. If there were no one here to worship them, they would leave the galaxy. The Jaffa were based on Dakara, and had used the weapon there to defeat and destroy the Replicators. Believing victory over the Ori to be impossible, they decided to use the weapon." She closed her eyes. "They died free."

"An honorable people," Nu'Daq said with an approving nod. His weapon hadn't wavered from the Cardassians and Romulans, Picard noticed.

"Only a Klingon would find the murder-suicide of an entire galaxy for transient strategic success an honorable settlement," Gul Ocett sneered.

"Cardassian military expeditions are far more prone to atrocities than Klingon ones," Worf pointed out.

"Quiet!" said the Romulan commander.

The hologram of Colonel Carter bit her lip, then opened her eyes again. "They told us what they were planning to do in advance, but we couldn't talk them out of it. We were only able to use the foreknowledge to save Earth."

"Among the Ancient devices we found over the years was a time-looping device that encloses the affected area in a self-contained pocket of subspace while causing the same ten hours to recur continuously until the loop is shut down. It would save Earth from the Dakara weapon and the Ori both—neither would be able to access it. We placed it in orbit around the nearest star to Earth, to provide a power source capable of running it for several thousand years."

"That makes no sense," the Romulan said with a frown. "It would take millions of years at least for life to re-evolve across the galaxy. Possibly billions. And humans are no older than any other species."

"*You* be quiet," Gul Ocett said. "I can't hear what she's saying. Though I agree, this must be some kind of Federation hoax." She glared at Picard.

"If it's a hoax, it's not on my part," Picard said mildly. He rewound the recording to where the Romulan commander had interrupted.

"—a power source capable of running it for several thousand years. We had a multi-national expedition force in another galaxy, exploring an important outpost left behind by the Ancients. That galaxy has its own enemy, called the Wraith. They are a powerful enemy, but victory is still possible. We sent the majority of our field personnel to them after destroying any information on Earth that might show the Ori how to find it if the plan did not work. Years after the weapon was destroyed, we sent a ship back to this galaxy, and found that the Ori had indeed left. We used the weapon at Dakara to re-create life in this galaxy at a much accelerated rate of evolution so that by the time Earth emerges from its long isolation, it will not be alone in the galaxy. Like the Ancients before us, we put fragments of our own DNA into the worlds we brought back to life, and we left this message to explain what happened."

"If the Asgard find this message: we tried to contact you before the time-looping device engaged, but received no response. Thank you for all your help over the years, and good luck with your cloning problem and the rebuilding of your society. You know how to find us. If Supreme Commander Thor is still around, General O'Neill sends his regards."

"This is Stargate Command, for the last time, signing off."

"Well, Captain?" the Romulan commander said, turning to Picard.

Picard shrugged. "I am as surprised as you are. To my knowledge, Earth history contains no record of such a program. However, a great many records were destroyed in the Third World War, which this recording clearly predates. The period leading up to the Third World War was one of paranoia and secret projects on all sides, including the program which eventually led to the Augments as led by Khan Noonien Singh. If this

'Stargate Command' was a classified program, and they purposefully destroyed information ... it is not surprising to me to find that they succeeded in eliminating it from the records." He frowned. "If it is not some sort of elaborate hoax, the best place to find out more about this program would be the Terran Archaeological Council; the North American Historical Society would probably also be of some use."

"I don't see how the genetic material could be faked," Doctor Crusher objected. "If it isn't true, the message would have to have been planted billions of years ago, in which case, why would they claim to be a member of an Earth military project? How would they know any of the details?"

"It wasn't run through the Universal Translator, either," Picard said. "She was speaking English, which would be appropriate for the period."

"What now?" said Nu'Daq. "When will we know for certain?"

"We may never know, for certain," Picard said. "It depends on how much has been lost. Even if the information still exists, it may take some time to find."

"Are we just expected to sit here and take your word for it that you'll share whatever you find?" Gul Ocett said.

"Those 'Stargates' she spoke of may still exist," Nu'Daq said. "If this is true, why have they not been found?"

"Perhaps they have," the Romulan commander said mildly. "If no one knew what they were or how to use them, they might not have come to any notice. The galaxy is littered with ancient artifacts of one vanished civilization or another."

"You're welcome to accompany me to the Enterprise for further consultation," Captain Picard said. "I would like to send this information off to the Federation as soon as possible to get the research started. Obviously, this will now be turned over to the archaeologists and historians, but the Federation has never excluded anyone from such pursuits. I'm sure if your governments wish to send scientists to participate in the operation, they would be welcomed."

Gul Ocett snorted.

"You can be sure we will," Nu'Daq

It took some further fifteen minutes to negotiate the details of the trip up to Enterprise: how many guards each faction could bring, what weapons, and what the ships would be doing in the meantime. The Klingons could not honorably be completely disarmed, which meant the Cardassians and Romulans demanded the right to bring weapons as well. Picard didn't trust the Romulans, and Gul Ocett had used up whatever vestigial trust he might have had when she tried to sabotage his ship, but it would hardly be politic to say so under the circumstances. As they beamed up to Enterprise, he consoled himself with the fact that none of them would be going anywhere unescorted, and they would all be leaving as soon as the initial consultation with the archaeologists was done.

"Open a channel to Earth," Picard said as soon as they were all on the Bridge. Between the guests and the guards, it was more crowded than normal. "I need the head of the Terran Archaeological Council, and the departmental head of Late Modern Era if possible, on the line immediately."

"Aye, sir," Worf said, having taken his position at tactical. He frowned. "Their secretary says they are in the middle of a departmental meeting and will call us back."

Nu'Daq snorted. Picard ignored him, raising an eyebrow. Usually, when the captain of a Federation Starship contacted someone, they were immediately available regardless of what they'd been doing at the time. "Please inform them that it is urgent that I speak with them *now*, Mister Worf," he said evenly.

Worf nodded, tapping in a few more commands.

The viewscreen blinked from the star field in front of the ship to a split-screen showing two average-looking Federation bureaucrats, both human.

"Captain, this is quite irregular," said the pudgy one on the left. "What was so important that it couldn't wait?" He squinted. "And what do the Klingons, Romulans, and Cardassians want with four-century-old Human history?"

"We've been working on a historical puzzle of our own," Picard said.

"Huh. Together? Didn't know any of them were interested in any history."

"We are when it potentially contains vital technical and military information," Gul Ocett said with a sneer.

"And you think Doctor Reynolds and I can help?" The bureaucrat shook his head. "Dunno if we can, but fire away. Oh, by the way, I'm Doctor Llewellyn Mbakop."

"Thank you, Doctor," Picard said. "Are either of you familiar with a program of the United States Air Force known as 'Stargate Command'?"

Doctor Reynolds, a petite black woman, shrugged. "Doesn't sound familiar, but then I'm not a military specialist. Let's see what a general search brings up." She turned and frowned at another screen. "Two references to 'stargate.' One was a mid-century experimentation into paranormal research, solely because the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics was believed to be experimenting in the subject. No results, and it was American but not Air Force. The other ... even less information. See also 'Project Bluebook,' which studied deep space radar telemetry, but that looks like a pure cover story. Under the jurisdiction of Home—wait, that can't be right. *Homeworld Security*? Let me double check

that. It may take a few minutes."

"What's this all about, Captain?" Mbakop said with a frown.

"The late Professor Galen left us with a bit of a puzzle," Picard said.

"Wait, the *late* Professor Galen? I hadn't heard he was dead!" Mbakop leaned forward. "What happened?"

Picard suppressed the pain he felt at his old mentor's death. "His ship was destroyed by a Yridian destroyer that wanted the information he'd gathered. He'd spent the last twenty years studying micropaleontology across this arm of the galaxy, putting together the jigsaw puzzle of the century."

"Of the last thousand years, at least," the Romulan commander—who had still not given his name—put in.

"Quite possibly," Picard said with a nod. "As it turns out, when you compare the basic genetic codes from a wide variety of planets spread throughout this arm of the galaxy, they combine to form a specific pattern. A holographic matrix, in fact, of a woman who claims to be a member of the United States Air Force serving in a program called Stargate Command."

Doctor Mbakop pursed his lips. "Sounds like a fraud to me, Captain. Earth had strictly intrasystem craft during the period of the United States Air Force, and not many of those; most of those capable of manned spaceflight could only make it up to orbit and back."

"Did the woman give her name?" Doctor Reynolds said, looking up from her screen.

"Colonel Samantha Carter," Picard responded. "Do you have a record of her?"

"Yes," Reynolds said, frowning. "Blond, 1.75 meters tall? Last record I have of her is in 2006, as a Lieutenant Colonel. Assigned to Project Bluebook; everything looks normal on the surface, but I could do some additional research if you wanted."

"Please do so," Captain Picard said. "Colonel Carter tells a story of ancient alien artifacts and time loops. While it seems improbable on the face of it, how was the holographic matrix planted if it isn't genuine? I am sending a copy of the recording—and all supplemental records we have about the individual genetic strands and the planets they come from—to you for analysis. Copies are also going to Federation Archaeology Council, the North American Historical Society, the Klingon, Romulan, and Cardassian empires, and all Federation archaeological bodies for study."

"You don't honestly think it might be true, do you?"

Picard shrugged. "As I have no idea how it might have been faked, I am leaning towards accepting it as true at least provisionally. It will need to be investigated thoroughly. If it is a hoax, someone will figure it out. If it isn't, we'll piece together the whole story much faster with many teams working on it."

"I guess," Mbakop said, shaking his head. "You have anything, Doctor Reynolds?"

Reynolds shook her head and turned back to face the communications screen. "It'll take a lot more time to get anything definite. That era was about as chaotic as you can imagine for record-keeping, and if there is anything to this 'stargate command' they had damn fine security, on a first glance at least. I'll have to consult with colleagues who specialize in the military of that era. We'll let you know what we find. I'm assuming that your guests are going to want copies, too?"

"Thank you, Doctor, that would be perfect." Picard smiled. "I will let you get to work, then. Picard, out." He turned to his guests. "The genetic data should have been transmitted to your ships by now." He glanced at Worf, who nodded confirmation. "I'm sure you are eager to report this to your own governments and archaeological bodies."

"Yes, and as soon as possible," Nu'Daq said with a frown at the Romulan commander.

Picard noted that, predictably, the two had gravitated to opposite sides of the room.

"Even though it is certainly a Federation fake, we will want our own scientists to find the truth," Gul Ocett said. "We know evolution took millions of years. There's no way they could have repopulated the galaxy in a few thousand, even with some miracle device."

"Current presumptions of how long it took life to evolve is based on the presumption that processes we can observe today took place at relatively the same rate in ancient times," Picard said mildly. "They also assume that the fossil record is continuous unless it is proven otherwise. If either of those assumptions is false, any conclusions based on them would be false as well. If the device repopulated the galaxy with life similar to what had been there before, and the time between destruction and repopulation were small enough, such a gap would be easy enough to miss."

"Perhaps, captain," Gul Ocett said. "We shall see." She nodded, then stalked out with her crewman and the Starfleet guard in tow.

Nu'Daq turned and left from the opposite turbolift; hardly surprising, as Klingons had no word for 'good-bye.'

"Thank you for your hospitality," the Romulan commander said with a slight smile. "It will be interesting to see how this is received back on Romulus." He bowed slightly and followed Gul Ocett to the turbolift.

"Are you sure you want to send this out to every archaeological team in the Federation?" Commander Riker asked after the turbolift doors closed on the last of their guests. "It sounds like it's going to be pretty controversial, and if it's true there's going to be an arms race looking for those 'stargates' mentioned in the message, and any other technology they left behind."

"True," Picard said. He'd sent the recording up to Enterprise while they were still on the planet's surface, and was pleased (though not

surprised) that Will had been alert enough to view it immediately. "But I could hardly keep it from our guests, so there'll be an arms race anyway; this way, at least it's an open one. No secrets in the dark. That was what did our predecessors in the twentieth century in, you know; obsessive intelligence competitions and arms races, leading to an ever-downward spiral of mistrust and betrayal until the whole system fell apart in World War Three. Even the democracies left their people in the dark about what was really going on until it was far too late. I'd like to think we've learned from their mistakes." He straightened his tunic. It had been a long week, and now that he'd solved the Professor's puzzle and the crisis was over, he could no longer push his grief aside. "I'll be in my ready room, Number One. Set a course for Atalia Seven as soon as our guests have departed. Let's see if we can still make some of that diplomatic conference."

"So that's a 'stargate,' Picard said, looking up at the big stone ring.

"Somehow, I was expecting something more impressive," Riker said. "More technological looking, at any rate. That thing wouldn't look out of place in Stonehenge if you took the connecting clamps off."

"No, it wouldn't," Picard replied.

"If it did look like technology, surely someone would have figured out what it was before finding the puzzle," Doctor Crusher said from his left. "They've found several—some on inhabited worlds—now that they know what to look for."

Picard nodded absently and turned his attention from the Stargate to the cavern it stood in. At one time it had obviously been a military base, buried underneath NORAD in Cheyenne Mountain. But several hundred years of neglect had done their work; moisture had seeped in everywhere, forming stalactites and stalagmites, rusting metal doors, computers, ducting, anything metal left behind. The ceiling had once had a hatch capable of opening, but that had ceased to work long ago. They would have to beam the Stargate out.

"It looks like we're all set," Doctor Reynolds said, nodding to the workers who had just finished setting pattern enhancers around the stone ring. "Captain, would you care to do the honors?"

"I would be delighted," Picard said. He tapped his combadge. "Picard to Enterprise. Beam the Stargate to the specified coordinates. Engage." He watched it shimmer out of existence, then turned to Doctor Reynolds. "How is the rest of the work here going?"

She shook her head. "They stripped pretty much everything out of here when they shut the program down, so there's not much left, archaeologically speaking. We've actually found better information from a place they called "Area 52," and from a research base in the Antarctic than we've found here. As for records and archives, now that we know what to look for we've found a surprising amount. They knew they were fighting aliens capable of wiping all life from the planet, so they wanted to make sure something at least survived, and it turns out that planning for apocalypse by alien invasion has something in common with planning for apocalypse by world war. There were backups of almost everything squirreled away, and we're finding it now that we know where to look."

"But not the address for the base in another galaxy," Riker said.

"No. That was purged pretty thoroughly, so it's not in any of the archives." She smiled. "As it turns out, however, it wasn't purged thoroughly enough. We've been tracking down records of anyone we think might have served in this project, and looking for any personal effects that might have survived. We found a diary from some minor functionary that mentions it in passing. Now all we've got to do is figure out how to run the thing."

"How long do you think that will take?" Riker asked. "Of the six that have been found, nobody's gotten one to work so far."

"We have an advantage. They left detailed instructions on how to use it." Doctor Reynolds shrugged. "There's supposed to be a device called a 'dial-home device' which functions as a control panel. Earth didn't have one for the SGC to use, so they had to cobble one together using computers they built themselves, and they recorded everything they needed to make it work. It shouldn't take long to adapt to modern technology."

"So if the other stargates don't have dial home devices either, they're not useable until someone figures out how to build one of their own?" Doctor Crusher asked.

"Actually, all but one of the Gates was found with a functioning DHD," Reynolds said. "The problem is stellar drift. The coordinates they're trying to use don't work anymore. The stargates throughout the galaxy formed a network, if you will. Each Gate with a DHD updated its position in the network whenever it was used, so even after millions of years the same coordinates led to the same planet."

"So if the Stargate network was not used for thousands of years, it would be unusable due to stellar drift?" Picard asked.

"Exactly," Reynolds said with a nod. "We know about this because the SGC had a home-built DHD and they had to run individual drift calculations for each address. The computing power they had in this place was nothing short of amazing, for their day—nothing else on Earth even comes close. We think there may be a way to get the Stargate network up and running again, but it would take a lot of work. We're bringing in a lot of physicists and computer specialists and mathematicians. You want to know what the most exciting thing they've found so far is?" She grinned like the Cheshire cat.

"What?" Picard asked.

"We knew Stargates could be used to travel to other planets; that much was obvious. We had assumed they were some kind of long-range transporter." She broke off, looking at them expectantly.

"But they're not, I'm guessing," Riker said.

"No, they're not. They're something so much more exciting." Reynolds bounced on her toes for a few seconds before leaning closer. "They create stable, controlled wormholes between one Gate and another for a limited period of time. The hard scientists are practically having kittens. It's not just going to revolutionize what we know of Galactic history, it's going to revolutionize our knowledge of physics and the universe itself."

"That's impossible," Riker said. "You can't build a controllable wormhole like that. And you can't create any kind of a wormhole in an atmosphere."

"Oh, we're all learning to believe six impossible things before breakfast here at the Stargate project," Reynolds replied. "We've actually recorded visual footage of the Gate in use. It's clearly a wormhole. It even has some generic visual similarities with the Bajoran wormhole out by Deep Space Nine."

"Doctor Reynolds," the com system chirped.

Reynolds raised a com link to her mouth. "Reynolds. Go."

"We've found something on level 18 that you need to see."

"I'll be right down there," Reynolds said. She looked up at Picard. "We should have the Gate up and running within the week. First thing we're going to try to do is contact the extra-galactic expedition, see if there's anything there. After all this time, especially since they were in a precarious position there, probably not ... but could you imagine if there is?"

"It would be quite an honor," Picard said softly, imagining what how excited Professor Galen would have been if he could have lived to see it.

Picard stood by Doctor Reynolds and the President of the Federation as the final coordinates were entered into the dialing computer. Behind them, the Gate Room was filled with dignitaries and reporters. Unlike its predecessor, this one was a light and airy space designed more for aesthetics than for security, although with modern technology it was still more secure than that cavern under a mountain had been.

The inner track of the stone ring began to turn, and chevrons along the outside began to light up. After eight chevrons engaged, a blue vortex appeared in the middle and swirled out towards the crowd. It was much smaller than the Bajoran wormhole, and its shape was different, but it was the exact same shade of blue. Picard exhaled softly. It was one of the most incredible sights he'd ever seen. Until that moment, he had not quite believed it was true.

The President turned to the viewscreen beside him and turned it on. "This is the United Federation of Planets calling the City of Atlantis from the planet Earth. Are you there?"

The crowd held its breath. When there was no response, the President frowned and opened his mouth to speak again.

"This is Atlantis." The screen burst to life, showing a dark-haired human. "Did you say you are from Earth?"

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!