

**Star Trek (#10) – “Devil World”**  
**Bantam Books | November 1979**

---

---

Back Cover:

*VOYAGE TO HEARTLAND*

*Heartland... a mysterious planet populated by a small but terrifying race of demonic beings. Heartland... where Captain Kirk falls in love with a beautiful, mysterious woman with a fatal secret. Heartland... where Kirk, Spock, and the rest of the Enterprise crew will be challenged by an awesome disembodied intelligence, more powerful than any other force in the universe!*

Summary:

The crew of the Enterprise has shown no hesitancy in taking complete advantage of the superb facilities available for rest, recreation, pleasure and delight on Starbase 13 after the lengthy duration of their last voyage; therefore, with the ship undergoing general maintenance, Captain Kirk has ordered full shore leave for the ship's compliment continuing until further notice. Included in that order, of course, are He, Spock and McCoy, who find themselves at a performance by Dr. Faustus, a magician. While attempting to enjoy the show, Captain Kirk and his officers spot a pale and fragile young woman, who they deduce based on her appearance, may be a Jain - one who follows the philosophy that brings no harm to any living creature, no matter how great or small. But during the magician's rather disturbing performance at the base, the young woman succumbs to inner demons and lashes out in uncharacteristic anger, and then faints straight away, intertwining their fates.

After a brief bit in the care of Doctor McCoy, she introduces herself as Gilla Dupree, the renowned senso-artist and composer of the great “Birth of a Living Star”. As an admirer of her work, a fairly new form of artistic expression that is a synthesis of symphonic music and holographic storytelling, Kirk takes to her immediately. But Dupree is on a mission of her own: she is desperately seeking her long lost father – Jacob Kell; a man known throughout the Galaxy as “Kell the Traitor”, so branded for renouncing the Federation and choosing instead to live within the Klingon Empire.

When Kirk learns through Dupree that Kell was last seen on NC513-II (a.k.a. Heartland), a planet quarantined after one hundred colonists went mad over 40 years ago, he decides to help Gilla retrieve her father and investigate the unexplained madness (and enforce the quarantine). Kirk sees Commodore Wilhelm Scheng, the station's commander, for any outstanding orders. When there are none, Kirk lays out his request. The Commodore approves of Kirk's ad-hoc mission on one condition: he asks Kirk to take on his son as a personal steward, as the young man has washed out of Starfleet Academy and needs direction in his life, training. Kirk reluctantly agrees – vowing never to use the services of a steward – and sets off on the four-day voyage to Heartland.

On the way, Kirk learns more about Dupree's father by spending time with her at a private dinner in his cabin and in the herbarium, a garden aboard ship that contains a thousand untamed varieties of Earth-like plant life: Kell was the captain of a starship who was the victim of a horrible accident. He and a few members of his crew took a shuttle to investigate a quasar-like object several parsecs away. The intense gravitational force of the object damaged the shuttle, destroying the craft's communications equipment and damaging the fuel reserves. After calculating that at its present mass the shuttle would never return to the ship, he threw everything overboard, including himself. Stranded in space in only a survival suit for nearly a month, he turned silently mad with nothing but the uncountable number of stars and the deep blackness of space as his companions. Unable to stand being with other people he defected to the Klingon Empire in exchange for the promise of a Class M planet where he could live out his life in solitude. He left for Heartland after the Klingons reneged on the deal and pressed him into service as an archivist for the Klingon Ministry of Space Exploration.

*“Captain's log, Stardate 4246.7. Upon our arrival at Heartland, I ordered my helmsman to place the ship into orbit around the planet. An immediate full sensor scan of the surface will commence as soon as a stable orbit is achieved. From the viewscreen, Heartland appears to be as reported: a lush M-type planet, with large oceans and considerable continental vegetation, an excellent prospect for human colonization. While here, I intent to investigate the question of continued quarantine and make a recommendation upon our departure. Our passenger, Gilla Dupree, remains under observation in sickbay. The exact nature of her illness - if any - is as yet undetermined.”*

When the Enterprise arrives at Heartland – a lush M-type planet with large oceans and considerable continental vegetation – Ms. Dupree insists on beaming down to find her father even though she has yet another fainting spell. At once the crew meets Reni Bates, one of the original Terran colonists who stayed after all others went mad. Although flighty, and untrusting (having not spoken with another human in near 40 years), he quietly tells Kirk about the planet and its inhabitants – the Danons. The Danons are barely a meter tall with copper skin, narrow black eyes, two curved horns protruding from the head, and a forked tail. At one point this race controlled half of the galaxy, but a prolonged war with the Torgas (who were slug shaped with tentacles) forced them to return and remain on their home planet. The once thriving civilization had, without the birth of a child in at least a century, dwindled to only one hundred or so adult Danons – a recipe for extinction. Furthermore, Bates knows of Kell but has not spoken with him. He lives with the Danons, Bates says, in their village. But when Kirk asks to be taken to these Danons, Bates is spooked, takes them up to the edge of their village and then disappears.

The landing party comes into contact with Dazi, lead host and spokesman for the remaining Danons on Heartland, who sees to their every need. Kirk requests an audience with the human man living amongst them, the man named Jacob Kell. The landing party's first meeting with Kell is strained, and ends badly with but one repeating wish from the man: to leave this planet... now. But rather than concern Kirk, the warning only

serves to strengthen his resolve and the Captain makes plans to stay. Meanwhile, Spock believes that leaving the surface might be a good idea indeed. Ever since he stepped foot on the planet, an unknown “force” has seemingly touched his soul, if only for a fleeting moment. This force is “the Great Machine”, a super-computer created by the Danons to achieve victory over the Torgas in their ancient war. The Great Machine contains the life essence of all Danons, and in turn it controls the life of each member of that race. Joining the Great Machine offers a form of immortality, as the life essence would forever be preserved in a collective consciousness. Most non-Danons went insane after being exposed to the Great Machine, including those of the original Federation colonists.

*“The machine knows about you. It’ll never let you go. It needs you too much.”  
“But why?” said Kirk. “Aren’t the Danons enough? Why should it want us?”  
“Because the Danons are dying. What can be lonelier than a god no one worships?”*

But as this ancient race nears extinction, the Great Machine becomes desperate to find someone to take the place of the Danons. First Crewman Doyle, a member of ship’s security attempts to merge with the Great Machine, going mad in the process. Second, Spock – after an attempt to force Kell off the planet’s surface has to be aborted due to malfunctioning transporters – tries to reason with the machine, and loses himself. Most humanoids go insane when they encounter the machine – Jacob Kell was one of the very few who were strong enough to act as the Great Machine's instrument. But Gilla, who is dying from a massive and untreatable tumor, refuses to abandon her father to this fate. She gives her last days to take his place so that he may live. Kirk attempts a rescue but barely escapes with his life – she holds off the combined consciousness long enough to allow the landing party to return to the ship.

Back aboard plus two (Reni Bates and Jacob Kell), Kirk is forced to recommend a continuation of the quarantine to Starfleet while a woman he loves dies on the planet below him. And Albert Scheng, the once childish screw-up is offered a post on the Enterprise in the security division after saving the life of Captain Kirk on the Heartland away mission.

*“Captain's log, Stardate 4257.1. ... and so my recommendation remains that the quarantine of the planet Heartland be not only maintained but more strictly enforced in the future. The mysterious machine intelligence that inhabits the planet will continue to present a clear and present danger to the general well-being of the Federation only as long as the Danon race survives. Since extinction appears to be only a matter of a relatively few years away, the situation does not appear to warrant an offensive response. Time is the ally of the Federation. I am further pleased to report that Mr. Spock continues to make substantial progress toward a full recovery and is expected to resume his normal duties within a few days. Our passenger, Jacob Kell, is also much improved. As for Gilla Dupree, I have not mentioned her in my previous log entries because –”*

{fin}