



**Can you unmask
the murderer in this solitaire
real-time logic puzzle?**

By John A. Theisen

Patrolling the Organian Neutral Zone can be nerve-racking, to say the least. Especially since your starship is a lightly armed *Derf*-class survey vessel. It has been at least three months since you allowed yourself even a day of rest and recreation leave. And lately, Captain Smith has been reminding you that "even devoted first officers" have to get away from the rigors of duty now and again. So when an interesting invitation comes over subspace radio from an old academy friend on Space Station K-2, you can't resist.

Reference Stardate: 2/2710.31

From: Commander Tom Rodman, stationmaster, Federation Space Station K-2, Klingon Sector

To: Lieutenant Commander Jacqueline Jackman, executive officer, USS Grand Coulee Dam, Military Operations Command, Star Fleet

RE: A formal invitation to the K-2 stationmaster's Halloween masquerade and murder mystery

The boys and girls and I are bored, bored, bored. So, to celebrate Halloween, we are cooking up a combination masquerade and live murder mystery. I know, Halloween is maybe the most human of holidays—except a few of my crew aren't human (one Tellarite, two Vulcans, one Edoan and one Caitian). Some of the others have never even been on Terra, let alone experienced this peculiarly Terran holiday. But they're willing to give it a shot, and you're invited to join us. (Your CO has agreed to be rid of you for at least a few hours; he probably needs the break as much as you do!)

All you need to do is dress up in some costume reminiscent of a character from Terran history, real or mythical (let me know who). I'll explain everything else when you get here.

K-2 is less than four hours away at cruising speed, and your own Captain Smith is in on the scheme. You quickly agree to accept 12 hours' leave for what promises to be a highly diverting night of entertainment and festivity. After signaling a response and making other rapid preparations, you beam down to begin a most unusual port excursion.

Your Cleopatra costume from ship's stores fits perfectly, and the decoratively attired crew lounge on K-2 has become a pleasing riot of historically costumed figures, music, food, drink and fun. Stationmaster Rodman, dressed as Elvis Presley, looks much as you fondly remember. Members of the station's 21-person crew haphazardly pop in and out of the lounge, carrying food, party favors or other paraphernalia appropriate for celebrating the occasion. Everyone is having a good time, and even Grusphnag, the Tellarite transporter officer, promises to pop in a little later and blow a few notes through her neosaxophone.

Now the masquerade portion of the event has drawing to a close, and everyone gathers around so the commander can explain the rules for the murder mystery. Almost everyone. Someone is missing. "Where is Ist'Nari?" the question arises.

Muttered comments are passed around; no one has seen her for "some time now." One person thinks she returned to the galley for more Altairian paté, while another thinks she retired early with a headache. After a quick intrastation call on the intercom results in no response, Stationmaster Rodman immediately orders an internal sensor scan and visual search of the station.

Officer M'Toaw is the first to detect Ist'Nari, and Officer Quantell the first to find her—in an air lock. Security Officer Lavalie Ist'Nari (dressed as Queen Nefertiti) is dead, and the crew of Space Station K-2 has a real murder mystery on its hands.

UNMASKING THE MURDERER

Rodman asks you, as a "disinterested Star Fleet officer," to coordinate the investigation. You explain that your skill branch was helm, not security, but he is persuasive, and you consent.

The station has a stress/accuracy analyzer, you're told. "It's an old, somewhat obsolete model, but it was working the last time anyone tried it. If we can find it."

The next few minutes are hectic.

A message is sent to the USS Grand Coulee Dam, requesting that it return ASAP. Its ETA

is four hours from now. The sending of the message is followed by an intensive sensor scan of the space station, which verifies that the only persons aboard Space Station K-2 are those who are supposed to be there: 20 crew, one guest (you), and one body (deceased).

The stress/accuracy detector is located, dusted off and set up in a briefing room. It is tested, and appears to be operating with about 98.4% reliability, probably enough to ensure that all "true" statements made are essentially factual, and all "false" statements are not. At least two members of the crew are present at all times in the briefing room; for the time being, everyone realizes that everyone else is a suspect.

In turn, every member of the space station's crew (including Commander Rodman) undergoes hasty testimonials, each making three statements while connected to the device. Just as the last person finishes her third, and final, statement, the detector shorts out (and it was the only one on the station). Nevertheless, before it ceased to function, the detector reported that every statement made by every crewmember so far was true: "Subject relaying accurate account—physiological changes within normal parameters." You realize, however, that the person making each statement may believe his statement to be accurate, while he may be in error and not realize it. Such an honest error would still appear to be truthful. This is all you have to go on for the moment.

STATEMENTS FROM THE CREW

Your objective is to evaluate all the statements made by everyone on board and determine who might have committed the crime and, if possible, why. No one said life in Star Fleet would be simple. Note that this is a real-time adventure. Start keeping track of elapsed time as soon as you begin reading the statements from the crew. *Time begins now.*

Computer Technician Adams (Male Human)

1. I remember seeing Officer M'roaw, Technician O'Hanrahan (who came down from the bridge for a couple minutes), Technician Neckols (who excused himself early), Doctor Sepit, and Officer Lemocks in the lounge around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. Ist'Nari was in a snappish mood this evening.

3. I was not directly or indirectly involved in killing Ist'Nari.

Deflector Technician Bartoc (Male Human)

1. I remember seeing Technician Unagol (carrying service trays) and First Officer Douglas (who excused himself early) in the lounge around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. I was intoxicated on duty on one occasion; Ist'Nari filed a reprimand which went into my record, and I never forgave her.

3. First Officer Douglas was having a relationship with Kell, which Kell didn't want Lemocks (Kell's immediate superior) to know about.

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Life Support Technician Cananelli (Male Human)

1. I remember seeing Officer Quantell and Technician Adams in the lounge and Technician Pew in the adjacent galley. I called Technician T'wing in her cabin to join us (but she politely declined) all around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. I was in a heated 3-D chess game with Commander Rodman in the lounge for most of the evening (which I eventually won), when he wasn't escorting the visiting Commander Jackman.

3. Fogerty and Ist'Nari were best friends; they were roommates at Star Fleet Academy, and Fogerty saved Ist'Nari's life once.

Assistant Stationmaster Douglas (Male Human)

1. I knew about Ist'Nari putting in a request for a transfer from Space Station K-2, but I postponed telling Commander Rodman so as not to spoil his party plans for the evening.

2. The last time I saw Ist'Nari alive was after she and Neckols served on bridge duty together, about four hours ago.

3. I was not directly or indirectly involved in killing Ist'Nari.

Security Officer Erixx (Male Edoan)

1. Ist'Nari was a competent security officer and seemed popular with most of the crew.

2. The last time I saw Ist'Nari alive was earlier this evening, as she was headed for the galley.

3. I only found out about my upcoming promotion a few days ago.

Electronics Officer Fogerty (Female Human)

1. I remember seeing Technician Neckols (who excused himself early), Technician Cananelli (playing 3-D chess), Technician Jagurund, and Officer Erixx in the lounge, and I called Officer Grusphnag in her cabin to see if she was ready to perform yet, all around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. I spent almost the entire evening shuttling service trays back and forth between the galley and lounge with Technician Unagol.

3. I did go belowdecks on one occasion around Ist'Nari's time of death. In the corridor I briefly heard a woman's loud voice, almost on the verge of screaming. I couldn't make out anything that was said, but it could have been Ist'Nari. Under other circumstances, I might have investigated, but I was weighted down with an armload of stuff for the lounge party and was in a real hurry.

Transporter Officer Grusphnag (Female Tellarite)

1. Where there are small crews and extended tours of duty, particularly when humans are involved, "close" relationships often develop. I would not be surprised if Ist'Nari's death was the result of a "crime of passion."

2. The last time I saw Ist'Nari alive was in a turbolift; she was angry and muttered something about "getting this over with, once and for all."

3. I was in my cabin tuning my neosaxophone around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

Sensor Technician Hardane (Female Human)

1. Ist'Nari was a little envious of a promotion that Officer Erixx was due to receive and felt that she was being passed over.

2. Ist'Nari was in a good mood this morning.

3. I had bridge duty with Technician O'Hanraghan (except for a few minutes when he left to get food) around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

Communications Technician Jagurund (Female Human)

1. Ist'Nari had a request in for a transfer; I transmitted the subspace message myself.

2. I didn't like Ist'Nari very much because she was always showing off with her credits; it wasn't that she was being mean-spirited—she was just insensitive.

3. I was not directly or indirectly involved in killing Ist'Nari.

Engineering Technician Kell (Female Human)

1. I remember seeing Officer Lemocks as I left the lounge, before the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. Ist'Nari once gave me an extravagant gift for my birthday; I didn't really feel I should accept it because I couldn't reciprocate, but she insisted. I was really touched.

3. I was with First Officer Douglas, in his cabin, around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

Engineering Officer Lemocks (Female Human)

1. I remember seeing First Officer Douglas (who excused himself early), Technician Kell (who also excused herself early, but left separately) and Technician Bartoc in the lounge around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. Ist'Nari stole Neckols away from me, and her "generous" offer of an expensive gift didn't help; I threw it back in her face.

3. Even though she knew I didn't like her, I remember Ist'Nari asked me to reserve the Eve masquerade costume for her; for spite, I secretly suggested to Quantell that she wear it instead. Station's stores could have fabricated two outfits, but everyone was determined to have their own unique costume.

Sensor Officer M'roaw (Male Caitian)

1. I remember seeing First Officer Douglas (who excused himself early) and Technician Jagurund in the lounge around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. It was common knowledge that Ist'Nari was having a relationship with Technician Neckols.

3. I used standard sensor search procedures, scanning level by level, to locate Ist'Nari's body.

Sensor Technician Neckols (Male Human)

1. I had a relationship with Ist'Nari, but it was over.

2. I once overheard an argument between Ist'Nari and Technician O'Hanraghan over some minor security violation involving the station's engineering equipment.

3. I remember that Ist'Nari caught Bartoc while he was intoxicated on duty and filed a formal reprimand against him.

Engineering Technician O'Hanraghan (Male Human)

1. I think Ist'Nari's family must be wealthy because she frequently wore very stylish, expensive clothes off-duty—much more expensive than she could afford on her Star Fleet salary.

2. Officer Lemocks had a relationship going with Technician Neckols, until Ist'Nari stepped in.

3. I had bridge duty with Technician Hardane around the time of Ist'Nari's death, except for a few minutes when I stopped by the lounge.

Electronics Technician Pew (Female Human)

1. Although I was busy and many crewmembers were going through quite rapidly, I remember seeing Technician Unagol (shuttling trays), Officer M'row, Technician Jagurund, and Officer Erixx in the galley around the time of Ist'Nari's death. I also saw Officer Fogerty shuttling trays before and after the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. The last time I saw Ist'Nari alive was when she came into the galley, stomped around for a minute or two, grabbed a few snacks, then left.

3. I was working on some electronic gear (which had burned out) in the galley around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

Communications Officer Quantell (Female Human)

1. I remember seeing Doctor Sepit, Officer M'row, and Technician T'wing (who excused herself early) in the lounge, and Technician Pew in the galley, around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

2. This afternoon, I got the Eve masquerade costume that I guess Ist'Nari planned to wear this evening; when she saw me with it on, she looked as if she'd been slapped.

3. I just happened to be closest to the site of Ist'Nari's body at the time it was detected by Officer M'row.

Stationmaster Rodman (Male Human)

1. Ist'Nari was a good officer and will be sorely missed; however, she was not what I would have called a close friend.

2. I staggered the duty roster so only two officers would have to be on one-hour bridge shifts during the evening of the masquerade.

3. My time was divided between playing 3-D chess with Cananelli and escorting the visiting Commander Jackman.

Medical Officer Sepit (Male Vulcan)

1. Ist'Nari rarely disclosed her personal feelings; it seems she kept mostly to herself.

2. Ist'Nari did not report to me this evening with any complaints of feeling ill.

3. In my expert medical opinion, Ist'Nari was killed in a struggle approximately two hours ago. After a brief forensic examination and several tricorder readings, it appears that she met someone in the corridor of a quarters deck, an argument broke out, and she was assaulted (hand-to-hand combat, as apparently no weapon was used). Her body was then physically dragged or carried down a level, and she was

stuffed into an air lock. It is not clear whether she was already dead, or just unconscious, when she was moved. The entire sequence of events must have taken 10-15 minutes.

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Communications Technician T'wing (Female Vulcan)

1. Before leaving the lounge myself, I remember seeing Officer Quantell, Doctor Sepit, First Officer Douglas, Technician O'Hanraghan (entering the lounge just as I was leaving), and Technician Unagol (transporting trays).

2. I understood Ist'Nari was retiring early for the evening with a headache.

3. I was in my cabin meditating around the time of Ist'Nari's death.

Electronics Technician Unagol (Male Human)

1. Ist'Nari ended a relationship with me, only to have one with Technician Neckols; too bad, because Ist'Nari was just too good for him.

2. I spent almost the entire evening shuttling service trays back and forth between the galley and lounge.

3. I was not directly or indirectly involved in killing Ist'Nari.

Do not turn the page until you believe you have solved the murder. Then, note the elapsed time since beginning the case and read Crew Alibis below.

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CREW ALIBIS

Time ends now. When a capital crime occurs, the guilty party is determined most often through establishing at least two of three factors: motive, opportunity and method. After evaluating the statements made by the crew, the following alibis can be pieced together. Based on these conclusions, only one person could have had both sufficient motive and opportunity to commit the crime:

Computer Technician Adams: Adams denies killing Ist'Nari, claiming he was in the lounge around the time of death. Cananelli saw Adams in the lounge around the time of death—solid alibi.

Deflector Technician Bartoc: Bartoc claims he was in the lounge around the time of death. Lemocks saw Bartoc in the lounge around the time of death—solid alibi.

Life Support Technician Cananelli: Cananelli claims he was in the lounge around the time of death. Fogerty saw Cananelli in the lounge around the time of death—solid alibi.

Assistant Stationmaster Douglas: Douglas denies killing Ist'Nari; T'wing saw Douglas in the lounge before the time of death. Bartoc, Lemocks, and M'roaw saw Douglas leave the lounge before the time of death. Kell saw Douglas in his cabin around the time of death; Bartoc says Douglas and Kell were having a relationship—solid alibi.

Security Officer Erixx: Fogerty saw Erixx in the lounge around the time of death. Pew saw Erixx briefly in the galley around the time of death—solid alibi.

Electronics Officer Fogerty: Fogerty claims she was shuttling trays between the galley and the lounge most of the evening. Pew saw Fogerty in the galley before and after the time of death. Cananelli says Fogerty was Ist'Nari's best friend and once saved her life—solid alibi.

Transporter Officer Grusphnag: Grusphnag claims she was in her cabin at the time of death. Fogerty called her in her cabin around the time of death—solid alibi.

Sensor Technician Hardane: Hardane claims she was on the bridge at the time of death, O'Hanraghan saw her on the bridge around the time of death—solid alibi.

Communications Technician Jagurund: Jagurund denies killing Ist'Nari. Fogerty and M'roaw saw Jagurund in the lounge around the time of death. Pew saw Jagurund briefly in the galley around the time of death—solid alibi.

Engineering Technician Kell: Kell claims she was in Douglas' cabin around the time of death. Lemocks saw Kell leave the lounge before the time of death. Bartoc says Douglas and Kell were having a relationship—solid alibi.

Engineering Officer Lemocks: Lemocks claims she was in the lounge around the time of death. Kell saw Lemocks in the lounge before the time of death. Adams saw Lemocks in the lounge around the time of death—solid alibi.

Sensor Officer M'roaw: M'roaw claims he was in the lounge around the time of death. Adams and Quantell saw M'roaw in the lounge around the time of death. Pew saw M'roaw briefly in the galley around the time of death—solid alibi.

Sensor Technician Neckols: Adams and Fogerty saw Neckols leave the lounge before the time of death—no alibi.

Engineering Technician O'Hanraghan: O'Hanraghan claims he was on the bridge (or possibly in the lounge) around the time of death. T'wing saw O'Hanraghan entering the bridge before the time of death. Adams briefly saw O'Hanraghan in the lounge around the time of death. Hardane saw O'Hanraghan leave the bridge for a few minutes around the time of death—solid alibi.

Electronics Technician Pew: Pew claims she was in the galley around the time of death. Cananelli and Quantell saw Pew in the galley around the time of death—solid alibi.

Communications Officer Quantell: Quantell claims she was in the lounge around the time of death. T'wing saw Quantell in the lounge before the time of death. Cananelli saw Quantell in the lounge around the time of death—solid alibi.

Stationmaster Rodman: Rodman claims he was playing 3-D chess with Cananelli when not on escort duty. You can vouch for Rodman, having spent most of the evening around him. Cananelli was intermittently playing 3-D chess with Rodman in the lounge around the time of death—solid alibi.

Medical Officer Septit: T'wing saw Septit in the lounge before the time of death. Adams and Quantell saw Septit in the lounge around the time of death—solid alibi.

Communications Technician T'wing: T'wing claims she was in the lounge before the time of death and in her cabin around the time of death. Quantell saw T'wing leave the lounge before the time of death. Cananelli called T'wing in her cabin around the time of death—solid alibi.

Electronics Technician Unagol: Unagol denies killing Ist'Nari, claiming he was shuttling service trays between the galley and the lounge during most of the evening. Fogerty saw Unagol shuttling service trays between the galley and the lounge during most of the evening. T'wing saw Unagol in the lounge before the time of death. Bartoc saw Unagol in the lounge around the time of death. Pew saw Unagol briefly in the galley around the time of death—solid alibi.

AND THE MURDERER IS...

Sensor Technician Neckols, committing the crime in the manner Doctor Septit theorized.

EVALUATING SUCCESS

Award your character 10 points in Security Procedures (or a related skill) if you won, or five points if you lost. If you identified the murderer, determine your success based on the following:

Less than One Hour: Holmes himself would have been proud!

One to Two Hours: Very good—for a nonsecurity officer.

Two to Four Hours: Thorough, no matter how long it takes, eh?

Over Four Hours: Try the academy's refresher course! Ω

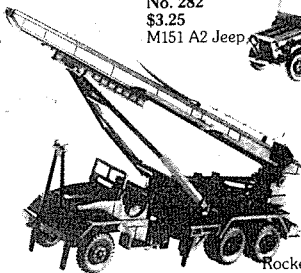
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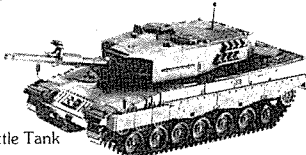


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