Once upon a time, the Vexalyne Matriarchy birthed a thousand stars. How they burnt out, nobody knows.

This is the odyssey of the Spinward by Candlelight. My mission?
To kindle what embers of civilization remain in the void.
To keep the Matriarchy's wonders out of the wrong hands.
And to leave a *sterling* impression of the Galactic Union in my wake.

Ten thousand years ago, the Vexalyne Matriarchy connected a thousand suns. Why those webs broke, nobody knows.

This is the journey of the *Space Jaunter Whalesong*. Our mission?
To forge links between these lost and lonely stars.
To keep the Matriarchy's weapons out of the wrong hands.
And to leave a *wonderful* impression of the Technarchy in our wake.

This is the odyssey of the *Spinward by Candlelight*. My mission?
To kindle what embers of civilization remain in the void.
To keep the Matriarchy's wonders out of the wrong hands.
And to leave a *sterling* impression of the Galactic Union in my wake.
“Your enemy is never a villain in his own eyes. Keep this in mind” - Robert A. Heinlein

The Technarchy and the Galactic Union: two neighboring civilizations reaching out into the great unknown. Each struggles for resources, allies, and scraps of the ancient Vexalyne Matriarchy’s near-magical technology. Are their ships bringing civilization and friendship to a strange frontier? Are they greedy for slaves, cannon fodder, and super-weapons? It depends who you ask, but at least they’re not at war. Yet.

We focus on an away team from an exploration vessel of each group. Each team will be the stars of their half of the show... and recurring villains on the other half. Our time is split evenly between both of them; each side has their own title sequence showing them as the bold heroes. We’ll usually see both title sequences in every episode, whether we’re showing two sides of an event both sides are involved in, or watching them have two completely unrelated stories.

And we will see their slow-burning conflict from both sides. With alternate character designs that drip evil when the other side is the one telling the story.

Parallax: a fun cartoon with cute talking animals, suitable for introducing kids to exciting space adventure. Also a meditation on demonization of The Enemy, the construction of propaganda, and the ways trying to get along with each other can fall apart. And maybe a bit of an attempt to train the next generation out of xenophobia. Epic sci-fi with a hearty dose of whimsy, aimed at the same audience as shows like ‘Adventure Time’ or ‘Steven Universe’.
Olivia Featherstone

Our bold leader! She’s the best shot the Whalesong has ever seen, so it’s a pity she’s just been demoted to cadet leader... again. Probably because of that thing with Cpl. Sanders’ kid. It’s not like it’s her fault half the boys and girls in the mess hall swoon when she looks their way, is it?

The Whalesong’s Tactical Diplomacy Unit 7 may not have been her first choice for a shot at fame and glory, but it’s the most fun her career’s ever been. She gets to negotiate with the locals and make sure everyone’s happy. She’s in her element and she has big ideas for this little team. It’s a good thing for them she doesn’t take much of anything very seriously.

Kurt Fischer

Here’s the battered, self-sacrificing hero of the Blue Peryton squad. Kurt’s always first out of the launch tube. Kurt’s always first into battle. Kurt’s often first out of battle—in a recovery pod.

Kurt just doesn’t care what happens to him, as long as his friends are safe. Another week in Dead Bay is nothing to him, even if he’s a bit worried about the strange visions he gets while he’s busy being dead. They give him fodder for his poetry, more and more of which is in a language nobody else recognizes.

Kurt is devoted but tired. Kurt may have gazed into the void a little more than is good for him.

Current respawn count: 37.
Baron K.

Twenty years before he was born, the Baron's planet was contacted by the Technarchy of Planets. He's been sent out to try and learn as much as he can about how the galaxy works, because if his family's kingdom doesn't, then one of its rivals will do it first. He's not afraid to ask stupid questions about how things work, either.

Kind and courteous to a fault. Olivia wishes she could get him to be a bit more self-centered, but he has romantic ideas about his Noble Duty.

His real name is very long, and involves about fourteen titles. The crew of the ship he left home on just called him "The Baron", and he's been pleased to let that stick.

Noah Brass

Noah is a quiet, relentlessly upbeat guy. He comes off more like a dance coach than a tactical genius. But his service record proves otherwise: two years of record-setting valor as Kurt's second officer. Sure, that came after record-setting mediocrity elsewhere, but Kurt has an ability to inspire Noah that is almost spooky. They room together, work together, and do almost everything else together, yet they never seem to fight.

In fact, Noah never gets mad at all. It might not be physically possible for him. Rumor has it that this is some genetic glitch related to old Matriarchal breeding lines. (His blood is spiked with gold glitter, so maybe they're right?) It doesn't make him any less willing to wreak havoc on a battle target, though, especially if Kurt's in danger. Lucky for Kurt, sweet little Noah is just as cunning as he is—and far more careful.

Stuart Grimaldi

Stuart moves through the world with delicacy and diffidence. And most of all, with caution. Caution’s good when you come from a radioactive trash dump of a planet that tries to kill you every time you turn around; caution’s also good when muscles bred for high gravity mean you could crush your friends if you got the slightest bit angry. So he just doesn’t ever get angry.

The survival skills he learnt as a young girl make him a handy guy to have along when you get stranded on a lonely planet a dozen parsecs away from help. But he’d rather talk about his growing skill as a sculptor.

Atber Lignslaw

Cold. Logical. Pragmatic. Atber is none of the above. They just literally know all the angles.

Atber is an artist, and speed-running the physical world is their art. Most of their attention goes to relentlessly scanning their surroundings for ways to jump, skate, spin, dash, rocket-punch, or talk through it as fast as possible; everything else is just a distraction. They’ll simulate a conversation with you 500 times in their head first, and know what you’re going to say before you do. They have secret plans for what to do if the floor ever turns into lava. Atber is ready for so many things that will never happen on their own.

Atber is mostly just interested in getting “achievements.” Nobody knows where the list of achievements comes from, who’s in charge of it, or if the points are good for anything, but there are thousands of entries on it and Atber’s got 73% of them, from “win 100 meter dash” to “survive 50 kiloton blast.” Atber volunteered for Blue Peryton purely because “all the really fun ones” on the list are easier to get in deep space. It’s a good thing the Weekly Challenges tend to line up suspiciously well with their missions.

Current respawn count: 15.
Edward Adams

Edward Adams insists there is no Edward Adams; his manager will try to convince you there’s nothing but. His channel sure attracts a lot of fans for someone who doesn’t exist, but Edward still insists there’s not much inside him besides songs and scripts.

“And those were never mine,” Edward mumbles under his breath, once his manager’s well out of range. He’s on the Spinward because the entertainment collective that owns his butt thought it was a good career move. Edward has been in front of cameras far too long, and he’s not sure how to act when there isn’t one there. One of these days, he’ll finally have a nice breakdown and decide whether he loves or hates it all.

Current respawn count: 2.
Do you know how much plastic surgery it takes to get that face perfect?

Vaxenchalowroth

Vax is all of two years old.

But Vaxenchalawroth is a thirty-thousand-year-old lineage of soldiers and clerks, and with the help of its collective memories in her genes, Vax can already stride around like the jaded old veteran of TDU-7. Even Olivia listens to her.

She’s the one who will volunteer to take you aside and tell you the painful truth you needed to hear. She has a wall full of medals she never bothers to wear, and a headful of truly vicious combat tactics that date back to single-celled ancestors. She’s also an eerily good guesser; nobody will gamble with her any more and that just makes her pout.

Don’t threaten her friends. She’s already been put through that a million times (by proxy) and she’s just in no mood.
**Dillon Treadwheel IV**

Who'll buy you a bottle of Uncle Fluffy's Tuna Soda down at the Whalesong's rec bay and chat your ear off? This guy. Who keeps Tactical Diplomacy Unit 7’s ships in perfect shape, despite never being seen working on them? This guy. Who knows way too many details of the crew's lives? Good ol' Dillon, that's who.

Who absolutely doesn't have any weird secrets you should pry into? Certainly not Dillon. Forget you asked that.

Don't worry about the way he glows in the dark. That's just because he sleeps in the drive chamber. Perfectly harmless to everyone. Here. Have another bottle of Uncle Fluffy's. He's buying. Wanna bet on the Combat Juggling tournament tonight?

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**Valerie 7f3u**

She's quiet and easily spooked, but Valerie is absolutely magical when it comes to repairs. Blue Peryton's ships are the envy of the Spinward's other crews, with tons of modifications to suit each pilot's style.

With her small army of cybernetically-linked, task-customized drones, she can work on every ship in the repair bay at once. While she's on the job, she lets the drones do all the talking for her too. Off duty? She's never said a word. The Vexalyne technology woven through her body devoured her speech centers (and her archaeologist parents) when she was five.

She considers her current body irreplaceable, and has the caution of a single-lifer.

Current respawn count: 0.
Admiral Cazaux

Admiral Marie Cazaux is commanding the Space Jaunter Whalesong on a five year mission to explore the Vexalyne Reach and leave a wonderful impression of the Technocracy in her wake.

Her lifelong dream was to be an opera singer. But duty calls, and now here she is making the hard decisions for what she hopes is the good of the Technocracy, and the galaxy as a whole.

We don't see her very much. She's too busy running the ship to have adventures.

Admiral Spinward

The Spinward by Candlelight is on a five year mission to explore the Vexalyne Reach and leave a sterling impression of the Galactic Union in his wake.

He's a little pompous, but he cares about the safety and happiness of all the crew living inside him. Both the live ones and those who flit amongst his Ghost Halls. Every so often he swaps presents and stories with his romantic partner, the Guess Who Forgot To Read The Instructions?

We don't see his remote too much. He's too busy being the ship to have adventures.

Current respawn count: 0. Ships are grown to last.
Proposed Episode Guide// Season 1

Overall goals: (1) familiarize audience with politics & culture of both Technarchy & Union; (2) get audience caring about both sides’ away teams; (3) show that the Outer Rim is full of dangerous pseudo-magical artifacts and eccentric people wielding them; (4) close season with Technarchy & Union away teams in an uneasy pact.

Each episode is in two halves - a Technarchy half, and a Union half. Sometimes they tell two sides of the same story. Sometimes they’re just thematically related.

1: Planet of the Fargos / Return to Bem E-G

The Whalesong encounters Bem E-G, a rural colony of quaint bug-eyed farmers with a problem. Every few months, thousands of robotic space bees buzzbomb their farmland from orbit, destroying the year’s crops. Olivia and the Baron blow up most of the space bugs in a whimsically videogamey space battle, are hailed as heroes, and bring back a spare powerup as a present for Vax’s second birthday party (which was interrupted by the mission).

The Spinward comes to Bem E-G a few months later. Turns out the Feds didn’t eradicate the bugs at all. Kurt and Noah discover that the space bugs have the personalities of friendly old ladies. They are explosion artistes who can casually transmit themselves to new bodies — and took getting blown up by the Technarchy as a friendly criticism of their work! The Union team brokers a deal and gets the Bem E-Gians to host to a tourist-friendly Explosion Festival. Peace is restored, if not necessarily quiet... and the laconic, blue-collar locals are left to make nice with excitable tea-drinking space bugs who tend to explode.

Edward’s biggest musical hero, Alizarin Crimson, has arrived in the Outer Rim for a secret musical project that has all his fans on the edge of their seats. Edward takes a couple days’ leave and tries to get his agent to arrange a meeting, but once he arrives, nobody will let him into Alizarin’s studio-fortress. Turns out he’s building a planet-sized daxophone that’s intended to create the Coolest Noise Ever (which will incidentally vibrate the whole galaxy at the superstring level and shake it apart). Meanwhile, Atber deliberately glitches the respawn system so there are ten of him running at once, nine of which will end up getting sacrificed to stop Alizarin.

2: The Fever Cathedral / Chipping Away

The Whalesong is being pursued by a space-going lifeform; it’s not big enough to be a serious threat, but it keeps ramming the ship and getting some kind of drippy purple-silver ick all over the engine intakes. Meanwhile, it’s supposed to be Stuart’s day off. He’s borrowed an empty launch bay to work on a gigantic sculpture and keeps getting interrupted by random well-meaning crewmates. He draws on the advice of an old mentor to keep himself calm and focused, but just as he’s nearly finished, a containment mishap ejects the whole sculpture into deep space. The space-beast mistakes it for a chewtoy and runs off with it, accidentally solving the crisis, but the crew is heartbroken Stuart had to lose all his work. They start planning a big noisy consolation party for him, but Olivia spots him happily back at work in his studio, smiles, and silently leaves him to it.
3: Tenchi Meow / Head Like A Hole

Just an ordinary day in the endless harem anime that is Olivia's shipboard life. Most of the boys (and a few of the rest) in the first-contact pool want to be Olivia's partner for the big Combat Juggling tournament, but all Olivia wants to do is win! Unless losing means she can help save Baron K from an underhanded bet with Dillon...

The Spinward finds a Matriarchy megastructure, apparently fading in and out of reality around a naked singularity. It seems to be a museum, but the exhibits are weird - none are from familiar cultures. They're also a bit dangerous, mostly due to all the warning labels being untranslatable ancient glyphs. Several near-fatal mishaps are averted by a mysterious black-skinned figure, who just giggles and vanishes when the crew approaches her. They leave with a few neat new toys, but no idea who they just met or where the museum goes when it's not there. We hint that the mysterious woman is an avatar of the black hole itself and knows something about the Matriarchy.

4: Ghost Hall / Domino Meltdown

TDU-7 discovers an ancient derelict floating in space, but fails to recognize it as a Union "ghost ship," where thousands of Union citizens live in virtual biostorage. The derelict went dormant after a collision, and the entire crew has withdrawn their minds into the Ghost Halls with their passengers, prepared to wait for rescue in data form. TDU-7 is sent onto the crippled ship to retrieve a Matriarchal artifact they've detected upon it. The team accidentally reactivates the ship's damaged rebirth pods and fills the ship with half-finished zombie Union citizens in the process. Our "heroes" get away with the artifact unscathed but badly spooked, with absolutely no idea they weren't attacked by Forces of Pure Evil.

The Spinward diverts course to deliver a secure genetic sample to some locals who signed on as Union allies, but he won't share the details with his crew. Meanwhile, Atber is chasing the "Domino Meltdown" badge on his list of real-life gaming achievements. His domino line ends up running several miles and getting in everybody's way, and when somebody sabotages it by stealing one of his best-placed dominoes, Atber has to look for a substitute that's the perfect size and shape - like that cassette with the Spinward's secret message on it...

5: Birdland / Wormworld

On a routine SETI run, Blue Peryton encounters a small asteroid settled by pretty but faintly creepy cyborg avians, ruled by a fully robotic harpy with the power to mesmerize organic life. The natives don't have proper hands of their own, so the Harpy Queen abducts organics and makes them serve as her people's walking, talking, perfectly compliant prosthetics. Noah gets kidnapped into service, and Kurt loses every ounce of his usual cool until his unicorn is returned safe and intact. In the meantime, we learn a bizarre secret about Noah's unique golden blood and why he's so loyal to Kurt...

Responding to a particularly odd hailing signal, TDU-7 runs afoul of... Doug. Doug is a race of tiny brainflukes, all with exactly the same personality. If you can call it that. Doug thinks catch phrases, humiliating pranks, and kneejerk puns are absolutely hilarious... as does anybody with a Doug "hangin' out" in their brain. Doug thinks he knows a lot of skateboarding tricks and doesn't need pads; most of Doug's "friends" have broken limbs. Every 22 minutes, Doug busts out a totally irrelevant moral lesson. As Doug possesses the TDU crew one by one, they run around committing TOTALLY RADICAL acts of complete idiocy - except for Stuart, whose crazy toxic biochemistry makes him immune, and Dillon, who just seems to be too lazy to care. Will they be able to convince Doug to grow up and move out of his mother's planet?
The Spinward takes pity on Lady Titanium Blue, a noble (and slightly spoiled) artist who was exiled from the dreary-but-elegant swampworld of Mugwort-4 for criticizing its new leader. She’s got a hold of a nanite bomb; she doesn’t want to hurt anyone, but if she gets her way, a puff of glitter’s going to turn Mugwort’s most sacred war memorial into a very explicit relief of General Moodak’s illustrious posterior. Convinced they’ve signed on to a good (and potentially hilarious) cause, Blue Peryton gets the Spinward’s permission to join Lady Blue for some artsy mischief.

Captain Cazaux comes to TDU-7 with a promise of an easy mission: spend a week on the Technarchy’s new allied world, Mugwort-4, and make sure nothing goes wrong with their treaty ceremony. Olivia and company can see some lovely architecture, chase some swamp beasts with the other tourists, spend a couple days loitering near the Victory Memorial they’re supposed to protect, and come home with neat shiny medals! But when they hear rumors that local troublemakers intend to ruin the memorial, can the TDU-7 track the threats down to the shadowy aliens who seem to be pulling all the strings?

After several near-misses with the TDU-7 crew, Blue Peryton finally meets them face-to-face at a run-down automated supply waypoint. Kurt and Edward get increasingly snarky about the lousy accommodations and broken interfaces, while Noah works entirely too hard to find a bright side. Meanwhile, Ather and Valerie sneak off to do horrible and unseemly things to the endless corridors of vending machines that fill the station. While they’re gone, Kurt and Edward end up in the snack bar, drowning their sorrows in cup after cup of Uncle Fluffy’s Tuna Soda (one of only two drinks available this deep in the Reach) while poor Noah listens to them gripe. The last straw comes when the TDU-7 barges in and Olivia starts tinkering with the soda dispensers, the Blue Peryton’s last fading link to sanity...

The Whalesong discovers Pside, a high-tech city even more advanced than the Technarchy, tucked into a warp anomaly. It’s a utopia in every material sense, with bread and circuses for all, but their society has fallen into a complete deadlock thanks to the Chronos and the Spacers, two rival adolescent subcultures who can’t stand how other side uses their amazing technology. They’ve dragged everybody else into their feuds — including the Whalesong, which can’t finish refueling thanks to the mobs of grumpy psychic teens mobbing the skywalks. The TDU-7 gets sick of waiting and defies the Captain’s no-contact order to see if they can knock sense into both sides, or at least figure out what the heck the Spacers and Chronos are actually mad at each other about.}

Noah is killed in action -- not normally a big deal for Union folk, but Noah is a special “Goldblood” who needs a rare mineral to respawn, and his new body’s used up the last of the Spinward’s supply before it’s even finished growing. A sickly Noah finds himself drawn to a derelict ship lost deep in the Vexaline Reach, the same one the TDU-7 tampered with earlier, and learns some things from the phantom residents that he’d rather not have known.
9: An Act of War / A Harmless Fluke

The *Spinward* is ambushed and attacked by the *Whalesong*. Only one shot is fired, but it seems to be some kind of bioweapon. It starts filling the *Spinward* with gooey self-replicating slime, and before long it's gumming up vital systems at a frightening rate. Before the *Spinward* can even start clearing out the goo, it starts melding into cute little fuzzy creatures that turn out to be extremely good at converting edible matter into more cute fuzzy things. The crew is safe, since an individual slime bunny is fairly pathetic, but the *Spinward* is in big trouble. While Atber takes this fine opportunity to work on his Million Splat achievement, Valerie and Noah barricade themselves in science bay and find the slime's weakness: Uncle Fluffy's Tuna Soda dissolves them on contact.

While taking in the beauty of a gas giant's rings, the *Whalesong* discovers an Old Matriarchy escape pod. There's nothing inside it except for a few cute little gooey bunny creatures in stasis. They cautiously revive them, and they turn out to be sweet and affectionate towards the crew. Their biology is bizarre and they have a tendency to breed fast and get into things, but when has something like that ever gone wrong? All is well until the *Spinward* crosses their path -- they've identified the *Whalesong* as the vessel whose crew ransacked one of their lost ships, and brawled with Blue Peryton at a waypoint! All they want are explanations, but things get heated fast. The *Whalesong* fires a non-lethal immobilization weapon at the *Spinward* and escapes. In the last shot, we see that the torpedo bay it was fired from is crawling with slime bunnies.

10: Family Ties / Progress Myth

The *Spinward* arranges a visit with his steady romantic partner, a Union vessel named the *Guess Who Forgot To Read The Instructions?*, before they're both sent off to deal with the Technarchy. The *Guess Who...* arrives with a huge shipment of supplies for the *Spinward*'s crew, and Blue Peryton settles in to explore the heap of new power-ups. Gradually, the emotional fallout of an open war starts to wear on the team. They start to wonder if the new super-weapons they've been handed aren't a little too strong for comfort, leading the *Spinward* and *Guess Who...* to confess some awkward secrets to the crew. Meanwhile, Atber receives a bittersweet legacy from a relative who's about to be archived into the ancestral Ghost Halls for eternity.

The Baron is not taking the Union's declaration of war well at all, and the crew starts to worry as he pines for his family and home. Vax and Olivia discover he had plans to visit home for his sister's formal knighting, but all shore leave's been canceled until hostilities end. While the conflict heats up around them, TDU-7 “borrows” an Old Matriarchy artifact and conspires to sneak the Baron — or a reasonable facsimile of him, at least — back home in time for the ceremony. Meanwhile, when Dillon gets a little too excited about the excuse to upgrade the team's combat vessels, Capt. Cazaux has a frank lecture prepared about the difference between power and force.
**13: Enemy Whine**

Olivia is alone on a secret mission for Admiral Cazaux; Kurt’s had an argument with Noah and Dillion about the war and stormed off of the Spinward. An uncharted tangle in the warp network snares Kurt and Olivia into a dimensional fold and they’re trapped together on an endless plain. Kurt has a vision of a rescuer and leads a skeptical Olivia to a Old Vexalyne temple hidden in the spacefold, but instead of a savior, the captains find multitudes of the “slime bunnies” that provoked the war in the first place. Kurt and Olivia’s truce is shaken, until they’re both scentmarked as Enemies of the Slime and the whole colony threatens to absorb them. Kurt accepts Olivia’s people aren’t the ruthless Slime Masters he thought, and Olivia accepts just how much trouble the Whalesong has caused Kurt’s people, but they seem to be a moment too late. How can they tell their crewmates the truth when they’re both turned into the same squeaky blob of goo?

**11: Peace and Queues / Bothers Insisters.**

While scouting out an Old Matriarchy heritage site, Blue Peryton meets the site’s monkish caretakers and is invited to a formal welcome banquet. They discover the dinner is more than just formal, it’s an elaborate test of their manners and “moral decency,” at least in the eyes of the monks. After bending over backwards to learn about their hosts, everything seems to be going fine for Blue Peryton... until the monks take offense at Valerie’s “refusal” to speak to them directly during the ceremony. It all comes down to Kurt’s decision: is a shot at Matriarchy tech really worth putting up with this?

**12: Lionfish/Guess Who...?**

The Technarchy has sent its flagship battle cruiser, the Lionfish, to support the Whalesong. Capt. Cazaux is given the impression they’re joining them for a diplomatic mission to end hostilities, but the Lionfish’s true purpose is to subdue the Union with a quick, brutal strike on their frontier. Meanwhile, the visiting Lionfish crew has the TDU-7 nearly convinced that the Union is made of raw, drippy evil, but Vax isn’t so sure, and she’s got a colossal history lesson saved up for her friends.

Guess who’s back in the Vexalyne Reach? The Spinward’s old flame the Guess Who...? is not about to let its partner fight the Technarchy on its own! After the desecration of a historic lost Ghost Hall, the Grand Union of Wandering Minds has had enough of those high-tech vandals. Meanwhile, the visiting Guess Who...? crew has Blue Peryton nearly convinced that the Technarchy is made of pure, glowing evil, but after finding he has a few devoted fans among The Enemy, Edward isn’t so sure.

**13: Enemy Whine**

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**Season 2**

Both sides start wondering why the Cute Gooblobs seem to be swapping signals with something big and Ancient way out in the middle of nowhere. Controlling it could be a heck of an advantage!

About 8-10 episodes happen along the way. Some are more arc-y than others.

Our heroes end up way out in the furthest edge of Old Matriarchy territory and wake up a Doom Bot. It does not remember what it was supposed to be attacking… but hey, these two little interstellar organizations are Not The Vexalyne Matriarchy, so they’ll do.

**Season 3**

The Doom Bot causes a lot of doom and the Fed/Union war is kinda put on hiatus. Ultimately it’s diverted by unclogging its memories and letting it remember that its target is way out past the edge of the Old Empire; its target is the same place the Cute Gooblobs are signaling back to, probably related to wherever that stuff comes from. The Spinward may end up a drifting, insane ghost ship with its crew trapped in endless broken dreamworlds for a few episodes, due to making a major sacrifice to stop the Doom Bot.

The season, and possibly the entire show, ends with an awkward diplomatic party where it is clear that nobody is really comfortable with each other. Probably via some deliberate callbacks to the Space Fargos Are Weirded Out By The Space Bees shots at the end of S1E1.

**Season 4?**

Five years is about the limit of how far in the future we want to think right now. We’ll make sure to leave some dangling plot hooks in S3; if we want to make more, and the fans and studio want more, we can figure out something. Split up and recombine the teams into some kind of Blakes 7-esque freedom fighters? Some new Outside Context Problem to deal with? Move on to new projects and let other people tell new stories in this world? Who knows.
Tiny Pilot

4-5 minute pilot synopsis: Olivia and Noah are drifting in space after failing to stop the Bad End of the multi-season arc, there's a giant self-replicating war machine on its way to wipe out their homes, everything is terrible forever and they're probably going to die in six minutes. They reminisce a little, hinting at alternate versions of some of the episodes laid out here, we get a sense of who they are, hopefully start to like them, then this show's equivalent to ST:TNG's Q shows up and gives them a chance to start all over again.
Appendix

We've been kicking this around for about a year now. Here's a handful of details that didn't fit into the main pitch - side characters, fragments of backstory, and definitions of assorted terms.

**Dr. Adrian Wahl**: The *Whalesong*’s counselor. A studious goose who can tell exactly where your buttons are and how to press them. Stern, pompous, confrontational, pitiless, but ultra-fair. Not the faintest bit concerned whether his charges like him as long as they’re functioning.

**Asphodel**: The snarky lolitagoth hare who keeps the *Spinward*’s Dead Bay running. Good-naturedly crude, but also the sort of person who’ll show up at 2AM with cookies when she realizes you need to talk to someone.

**Armature**: Huge biorganic Union mechs. Ornately-decorated, highly customized, and vaguely medieval-looking. Big enough to pick up a Technarchy fighter and use it like a gun.

**Cake**: The only thing anyone on the *Whalesong* is ever seen to eat. This is never discussed. Is it some kind of superfood? Is it censoring something far more unpleasant? We *never* hang a lampshade on this; let fans speculate. It’s just cake.

**Combat Juggling**: A popular Technarchy sport, demanding dexterity, guile, and acrobatics. Olivia is very good at it.

**Dot Eating**: A Technarchy tactic involving deliberately taking a lot of energy fire to a ship's shields, with the intent of recycling it into offensive blasts.

**Featherstone Heavy Industries**: A major manufacturing Technarchy manufacturing organization, founded by Olivia's great grand-dad after he found Vexalyne hyperdrive tech and lived to tell the tale.

**Galactic Union, The**: A plant-based Vexalyne backup system that's gone feral. They are the nicest Pod People you will ever meet. And if you want to be replaced by an infinitely-reproducible copy of yourself who's indistinguishable from the original until someone cuts you open to reveal candy-colored fungal sludge, they'll be happy to help you with that. The general aesthetic is “goth dryads”; the Spinward looks like a giant squid made out of cathedrals, grown from one tree.

**Ghost Halls**: The part of a Union ship that exists only in the vast computational resources of the shipmind. It is typically around 20-40x as spacious as the actual ship. Here on Earth, we call these sorts of things “virtual realities” or “the Matrix”, or maybe even “the best MMORPG I’ve ever played”. These areas and their inhabitants may be rendered in a painterly or hand-drawn fashion via style transfer tricks, to make them clearly distinct from “real” stuff.
**Ghost World:** The sum of all Union ship’s Ghost Halls, and the much larger Ghost Lands that are simulated by Union worldminds.

**Ghosts:** Members of the Union who exist entirely in the Ghost Halls. It is a non-trivial thing, but not uncommon for a Ghost to become embodied. Some never do, preferring the freedom of not being constrained by physics. Some Ghosts began life in physical bodies; many more were born in the Ghost World. Like the Ghost Halls, these may be rendered in a painterly or hand-drawn style.

**Goldblood:** A special breed of Union citizen, originally designed to be both completely unflappable and somewhat servile to bird-like people. Respawning one of them requires certain rare materials.

**Mandrake:** Edward’s assistant, an AI who is a Professional Thespian. They perform the role of Edward in a lot of secondary social media appearances. Mandrake also acts as Edward’s cameraman, directing and enhancing his livestreams for Space Youtube. They have no interest in manifesting in the flesh, and are prone to change costumes at the drop of a hat. When not performing as Fill-In Edward, they tend to manifest as a skinny pink panther with a diamond choker.

**Technarchy, The:** A loose federation of several planets, bound together by trade agreements, and by the advanced energy-field technology they found in Vexalyne remnants. Their general tech aesthetic is “angular slabs of white metal held together by blue fields”.

**Twin:** A black hole, who refuses to eat sentients. A remnant of the Matriarchy’s work, with whimsical plans. A meddling space goddess with a thousand sisters. She tends to show up now and then with lessons for one set of heroes or the other. She likes to shape her event horizon into the friendliest monster you’ve ever seen, with a vaguely feminine attitude and a hide covered in infinitely fractal spirals.

**Vexalyne Matriarchy:** Once upon a time, a mighty empire ruled the stars, far past the ends of Rumored Space. What exactly happened to them is a mystery that may or may not be explored in the course of this show; what matters is that, as Ancient Space Empires in pulp fiction are prone to do, they vanished, leaving all kinds of (dangerous, broken, incomprehensible) toys behind for our heroes to play with.
the reach of the former Vexalyne Matriarchy

Galactic Union

Ginnungagap

Rumored Space

Technarchy of Planets

the Pacific Gulf

path of the Whalesong

path of the Spinward by Candlelight
That, then, is Parallax.

We hope to do this in non-photorealistic 3D. We’re pretty excited about current developments in digital puppetry and style transfer. And about the prospect of reusing the assets we build for the show in VR, games, comics, and whatever else. These sorts of things were sci-fi pipe dreams in our youth; let’s use them to talk about their possible effects. And to talk about new crazy ideas as well.

In our wildest dreams, this becomes a franchise that stays with kids who are currently around 7 and up the way “Star Wars” stayed with our generation, and a lot of the people involved have a nice regular income from that. And it inspires some kids to push towards careers in space exploration, or making the high-tech toys we play with in this show real. We’d be happy with just keeping ourselves and our crew employed for a few years telling some fun space adventure stories, though.

Here’s the seed for a universe. Wanna see how big we can make it grow?

-Margaret Trauth and Nick Brienza
contact us: egypt@urnash.com
not laid out yet:

* about a dozen plot synopses for season 1
* rough outlines of seasons 2/3
* the appendix (various sketches, half-baked plot fragments, etc)
* the glossary

TO DO

* final character desc edits, especially Unions
* new drawing for Dillon, he needs to be on his monowheel fuck it
* new solo drawing of Edward to match new hair and wing colors
* Cap’n Cazaux looks a bit derpy, fix this. She looked better in the first version.
* Atber looks a bit derp now that he’s flipped, too. Also androgyze them a bit now that they’re gender-indeterminate.
* Maybe swap Atber/Stuart with Vax/Edward so I don’t flip anyone?
* Maybe just flip the Union/Fed handedness of the whole thing
* mmmaybe a slightly heavier body font, I dunno
* maybe move the Captains into the ‘other characters’ section of the appendix? no
* I probably need to draw the damn spaceships
* make sure stories are updated
* lead with pilot?
* spelling checks: Techs, Mr. Treadwheel