

= The Aenar =

" The Aenar " is the fourteenth episode of the fourth season of the American science fiction television series *Star Trek : Enterprise* , and originally aired on February 11 , 2005 . It was written by André Bormanis from a story by Manny Coto , and was directed by Mike Vejar . " The Aenar " was the third installment of a three @-@ part story which concluded the events of episodes " Babel One " and " United " .

Set in the 22nd century , the series follows the adventures of the first Starfleet starship *Enterprise* . In this episode , Captain Jonathan Archer (Scott Bakula) and Commander Shran (Jeffrey Combs) travel to Andoria , a moon , seeking the help of the Aenar ? an offshoot race of the Andorians ? one of whom has been taken by the Romulans to pilot a drone vessel (first seen in the previous episode) .

The episode showed the home world of the Andorians for the first time , with the sets for the planet 's ice tunnels being created on a sound stage . Alexandra Lydon and Alicia Adams made their first *Star Trek* appearances in " The Aenar " . Reviews of the episode were mostly negative , with critics citing issues with plot holes and unanswered questions from the story arc . On its first showing , 3 @. @ 17 million watched the episode .

= = Plot = =

Senator Vrax (Geno Silva) , fresh from the Romulan Senate , is disappointed that Admiral Valadore (Brian Thompson) and scientist Nijil 's (J. Michael Flynn) drone program has failed to provoke a rift between Human , Andorian and Tellarite races as they had hoped (seen in " Babel One " and " United ") . In fact , the opposite has happened ? political discord throughout the Alpha and Beta Quadrants has declined . Now that a second drone vessel is ready to be launched , Valadore suggests a mission against the *Enterprise* in order to impress the Senate . Nijil argues that the pilot requires time to recover from his previous exertions , but Valadore insists and prioritizes the mission .

On *Enterprise* , analysis of data gathered in the previous encounter with the Romulan ship reveals that the ship is being piloted telepathically by an Andorian . Commander Shran (Jeffrey Combs) explains that the data indicates that the pilot is probably a member of the Aenar , a white @-@ skinned and blind Andorian sub @-@ race . This , however , seems unlikely , since the Aenar are few in number , reclusive pacifists , and inhabitants of the isolated extreme northern polar region of their moon . Shran and Captain Jonathan Archer (Scott Bakula) then beam down to contact the Aenar . The Aenar 's spokesperson , Lissan (Alicia Adams) , initially declines to assist as the Aenar do not want to get involved in a war . However , a young Aenar named Jhamel (Alexandra Lydon) decides to help , since doing so may help locate Gareb (Scott Allen Rinker) , her missing brother .

Meanwhile , Doctor Phlox (John Billingsley) , Commander T 'Pol (Jolene Blalock) , and Commander Charles " Trip " Tucker III (Connor Trinneer) work in Sickbay on their own " telepresence " unit to help counter the drone ship . T 'Pol volunteers to test it , and a concerned Tucker finds it increasingly difficult to balance his duties and emotions . Jhamel then tests the unit , with better results . Later , when the drone ships reappear and attack , she is able to contact the drone pilot , and it is indeed her long @-@ lost brother , who was tricked into working with the Romulans . Learning the deception of his " helpers " , he turns the drones on each other and both are soon destroyed , and Valadore angrily kills him as retribution for his failure . With the threat resolved , the Andorians depart *Enterprise* and but Tucker requests to leave the ship to join the *USS Columbia* .

= = Production = =

" The Aenar " was the third and final part in the Romulan story arc , comprising " Babel One " , " United " and " The Aenar " . It was written by André Bormanis from a story by show runner Manny Coto . Bormanis had also written " Babel One " , and earlier in the season the episode " Awakening "

, which formed part of the Vulcan story arc . " The Aenar " was directed by Mike Vejar , his third episode of the season .

This episode was the first time the homeworld of the Andorian race was represented on screen . The race had been introduced in the Star Trek : The Original Series second season episode " Journey to Babel " . The interior of a sound stage was fitted out to appear like caverns on the ice world as it was theorized that this was the environment in which a race such as the Andorians , including the Aenar sub @-@ species , could have evolved . These sets were enhanced in post @-@ production using computer @-@ generated imagery .

Filming began on November 22 , 2004 , and was completed on December 2 , with the production being halted for two days due to Thanksgiving . The majority of the guest stars from earlier installments of the trilogy returned for " The Aenar " , and they were joined by Alexandra Lydon and Alicia Adams , who were both making their first appearances in a Star Trek series . Kim Koski was the stunt double for Jeffrey Combs during a scene in which Shran was impaled through the leg by a stalagmite .

= = Reception and home media release = =

" The Aenar " was first aired in the United States on UPN on February 11 , 2005 . It was watched by 3 @.@ 17 million viewers , which was an increase on the 2 @.@ 81 million viewers who watched the previous episode . The following episode , " Affliction " , received around the same number of viewers as " The Aenar " .

Michelle Erica Green , while writing for the website TrekNation , thought that the episode had strong character development despite the other flaws present . She felt that it opened up a number of questions about the abilities of the Andorians due to their similarity to the Aenar , and enjoyed the issues present in the Tucker / T 'Pol relationship . Although she said that it was the " weakest " of the story arc , it was also the most " gripping " . Jamahl Epsicokhan , at his website Jammer 's Reviews , gave the episode two out of four , adding that " The Aenar " was " aimless " since the majority of the storyline ended in the previous episode . He found fault with the plot , as the Romulan threat was unspecific , and because of several plot holes which the episode failed to explain .

David Greven , in his book Gender and Sexuality in Star Trek , said that the Aenar were an example of the " uncanny whiteness " style characters which appear in the franchise which are used to provide a " denatured form of whiteness " to the viewer . Other examples of these type of characters include the Borg and the human @-@ like Klingons explained earlier in season four of Enterprise . He added that the blindness of the Aenar acted as an allegory for the way in which white people are unable to perceive their own whiteness .

" The Aenar " was released on home media in the United States on November 1 , 2005 , as part of the season four DVD box set of Enterprise . The Blu @-@ ray edition was released on April 1 , 2014 .