

= Babel One =

" Babel One " is the twelfth episode of the fourth season of the American science fiction television series Star Trek : Enterprise , and originally aired on January 28 , 2005 . The episode was written by Mike Sussman and André Bormanis , and directed by David Straiton . " Babel One " was the first of a three @-@ part story which continued in the episodes " United " and " The Aenar " . The arc was intended to precede the Romulan War which had been mentioned in previously aired episodes of the franchise , while " Babel One " was a reference to the Star Trek : The Original Series episode " Journey to Babel " .

Set in the 22nd century , the series follows the adventures of the first Starfleet starship Enterprise , registration NX @-@ 01 . In this episode , Enterprise is escorting a Tellarite Ambassador , when they respond to distress calls from Andorian vessel under attack . Pursuing the mysterious attacking vessel , they begin to uncover a plot to derail cooperative relations between the Tellarites , Andorians and Humans .

The guest cast included several actors who had previously appeared in the franchise , including Lee Arenberg , Brian Thompson and Jeffrey Combs . It also featured Molly Brink for the second time as Lieutenant Talas . The episode required extensive make @-@ up for the guest cast , with Brink undergoing more than four and a half hours of work prior to filming for her first day on set as she had to be painted blue head to toe in addition to the normal prosthetics . Reviewers were positive of the episode , calling it an improvement on the previous week 's " Observer Effect " , and praised the ending . Although Nielsen ratings of 1 @.@ 7 / 3 percent showed an improvement over the previous episode , the number of actual viewers was the lowest yet for the series with 2 @.@ 53 million watching the episode on the first broadcast .

= = Plot = =

It is November 2154 , and Captain Archer and Ensign Sato spend time preparing for the arrival of Ambassador Gral and the Tellarite delegation , by practicing being blunt , complaining , and arguing . En route to the trade summit on " Babel One " , they detect a distress call from the Andorian warship , Kumari , now under attack . Enterprise alters its course to assist , and arrives to find Captain Shran , Lieutenant Talas , and 17 other survivors in escape @-@ pods . Archer goes to meet him in Sickbay , and an angry Shran claims that both the Andorian Ambassador 's and his ship were attacked and destroyed by a powerful Tellarite vessel .

Scans of the debris indicate Tellarite weapon signatures , and recovered sensor data shows a Tellarite vessel firing . With both delegations on board , and accusations of duplicity rising between the groups , Archer considers taking the Andorians to their homeworld . At full warp , Enterprise is suddenly attacked by an Andorian ship . When attempts at communicating fail , Archer demands that Shran intervenes ? he complies by explaining how to knock out its shields ? but the attempt is ineffective . Enterprise is spared only when the attacking ship has to retreat because of a fluctuating power grid . T 'pol then notices that the " Andorian " and " Tellarite " ships have the same energy signature .

Shran is unconvinced , and using Talas as a distraction , manages to escape and capture Gral , before order is restored . The alien vessel is then tracked , and it appears to be capable of holographically disguising itself . Commander Tucker , Lieutenant Malcolm Reed and several MACOs beam aboard the ship , only to find it deserted and without life support . Tucker and Reed become stranded when the vessel warps away , and make their way to an empty bridge . On Romulus , it is revealed that the ship is actually being controlled remotely by a group of Romulans (led by Admiral Valdore , a scientist called Nijil , and a virtual pilot) in an attempt to prevent a regional détente .

= = Production = =

The episode was written by Mike Sussman and André Bormanis . The duo had previously

collaborated on several episodes , the most recent of which season three 's " Hatchery " . Meanwhile , they had written episodes individually , with Sussman writing three episodes so far during season four and Bormanis penning " Awakening " . " Babel One " was directed by David Straiton , his third in season four after the second part of " Storm Front " as well as the stand @-@ alone episode " Daedalus " .

Filming began on November 2 , 2004 and lasted until November 10 . The first scene filmed was on the Andorian bridge , which had been used in previous episodes but was made to look battle damaged for this episode . Other sets used included the standing sets to represent the Enterprise , as well as new sets showing the interior of the Romulan vessel . The title of the episode was an intentional reference to the Star Trek : The Original Series episode " Journey to Babel " . The three part story was intended to represent a precursor to the Romulan Wars which had been referenced in " Balance of Terror " and " The Defector " .

= = = Casting and make @-@ up = = =

The guest cast included a number of Star Trek alumni . Jeffrey Combs returned to his recurring role of Shran , for his second appearance during season four . Joining him as a returning Andorian , was Molly Brink who had previously appeared as Talas in the episode " Proving Ground " . Brian Thompson played the Romulan Valdore , having previously appeared in Star Trek : The Next Generation and Star Trek : Deep Space Nine as well as the film Star Trek Generations . He is better known for portraying the Alien Bounty Hunter in The X @-@ Files and Luke , a vampire who becomes The Master 's " vessel " in Buffy the Vampire Slayer . Another Deep Space Nine actor who portrayed a new character in this episode was Lee Arenberg . He had previously appeared in a variety of roles across the franchise , three times as a Ferengi in The Next Generation and Deep Space Nine (including one , coincidentally also named Gral , no relation to the Tellarite Gral he plays here) . He also appeared as a Malon , Pelk , in the Star Trek : Voyager episode " Juggernaut " .

The guest cast required a variety of levels of make @-@ up to portray their alien characters . Combs ' make @-@ up took around three and a half hours each day , as did the Tellarite prosthetics . The Andorian female cast members took around four and a half hour each day to get into make @-@ up and costume , but on the first day Brink required further make @-@ up time as that day 's shoot required her to appear in @-@ character in her underwear . This meant that after the normal make @-@ up schedule , she was sprayed blue from head to toe . At the end of that day 's filming , the shower facilities at the studio 's executive gym was used to remove the paint . Meanwhile , the Romulan make @-@ up took three hours to apply , with all the relevant scenes completed in a single day .

= = Reception and home media = =

" Babel One " was first aired in the United States on UPN on January 28 , 2005 . The episode received a Nielsen rating of 1 @. @ 7 / 3 percent . This means that it was seen by 1 @. @ 7 percent of all households , and 3 percent of all of those watching television at the time of the broadcast . This was an increase in ratings compared to the previous week 's episode , but saw a lower overall number of viewers . " Babel One " was watched by 2 @. @ 53 million viewers , the lowest overall number of viewers to date for a first run episode of Enterprise .

Michelle Erica Green in her review for TrekNation enjoyed the interaction between Shran and Graal , and thought it was an improvement over the previous week 's " Observer Effect " . She also compared it to The Original Series episode " Journey to Babel " , which she watched immediately prior to the Enterprise episode . She said that " On the surface " Babel One " has a very similar plot , yet it plays out like an original take on the situation rather than a retread . " Jamahl Epsicokhan at his website Jammer 's Reviews thought that the majority of the episode was " passable " but ultimately ended on a " good note " due to the twist in the ending . However , he criticised the promotional campaign by UPN , as he felt that the trailer for the episode had the " unfortunate effect

of making the first 30 minutes of the plot extremely obvious to us , forcing us to watch in frustration while the characters put the pieces together " . He gave the episode a rating of three out of four .

The first home media release of the episode was on DVD ; having been released as part of the season four box set on November 1 , 2005 in the United States . The Blu @-@ ray edition was released on April 1 , 2014 .