

## EXCERPT

Three stories fall under the rubric of alien encounters. But the takeaway from each story may be different for each and every reader.

The first story, **Reframing the Non-Interference Directive**, presents a spinoff of the political/philosophical principle popularized in the “Star Trek” series of TV shows – that we should not interfere with the development of other-worldly cultures and societies. However, in this story, many different diplomatic approaches (some interfering and some not) are tried, and all are found wanting in one way or another. Over time, the diplomatic process winds its way to a final logical conclusion.

The second story, **Dimensional Waves, Energy Transmission, and Magical Information Transfer**, is a straightforward account (the curious title notwithstanding) of an alien culture whose instincts for exploration pushes them to the very edges of science and religion. How much like them are we? And what is the most likely scenario for a future when at the very extremes? Furthermore, how will a breakdown, glitch, or anomaly affect the possible futures?

The third story, **The World of the Emissaries**, is a strange tale of periodic alien visitation over the millennia. At first just ‘Watchers’ but then teachers and helpers, the whole alien encounter experience unravels into an ugly mess of immorality, violence, and conundrum. Evil giants roam the land and human civilization is threatened. The aliens try to correct the degraded evolution by use of an extermination event. But there are survivors – and they slowly begin to turn evil again. What will the alien visitors do now?

As a bonus, a more lighthearted tale is included as a fourth story. Not involving alien encounters, it is more a mythological exercise than science fiction. Based on folk legend, **Andrei and the Beautiful Vampiress** is a compelling story with moral overtones and subtle insights. It's a story with real heroes and villains set in a fairytale atmosphere, and with a fairytale ending. But like a good story, there are a few twists and turns along the way – especially at the end.