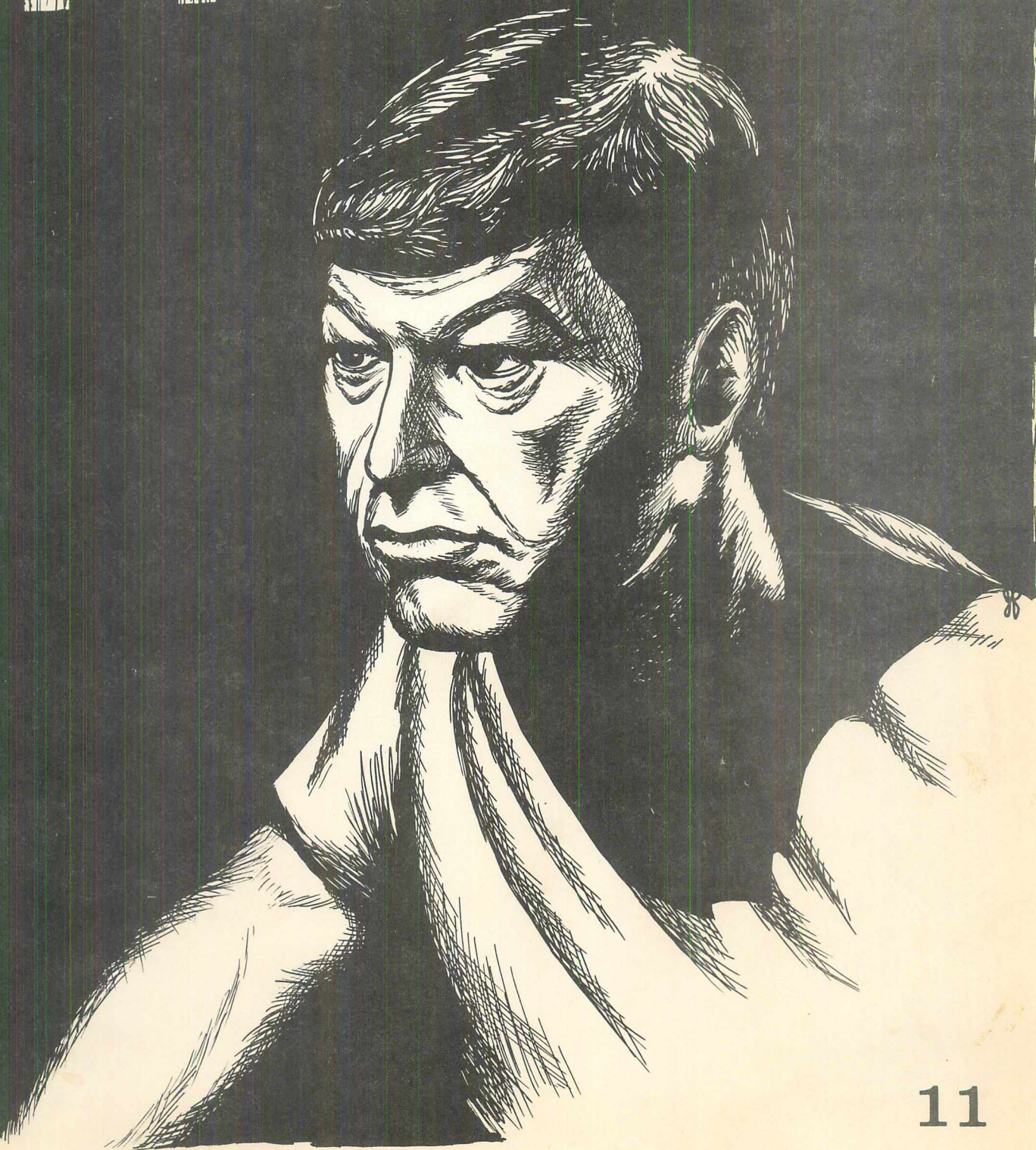


T-NEGATIVE





T-Negative 11, July 1971, comes from Ruth Berman, 5620 Edgewater Boulevard, Minneapolis Minnesota 55417.

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Illos: Anthony Tollin, pp. 5, 15, 22, 27, 36, 37, 41; Barbara Marczak, p. 7; Bernie Zuber, p. 9; Jackie Franke, pp. 11, 17, 19, 21; Rosalind Oberdieck, pp. 24, 45; Clarica Scott, p. 30.

This envelope was foisted off on you for at least one of the following reasons:

- ☐ I felt like sending it to you.
- ☒ You contributed.
- ☐ Miguelito Loveless strikes again.
- ☐ You paid money at the rate of 50¢ for one or \$2 for five --
- ☐ -- and your subscription just ran out.

Back issues are available for 75¢ for one or \$2 for three; at present, #'s 2, 3, 9, and 10 are available. I hope to reprint some others this summer.

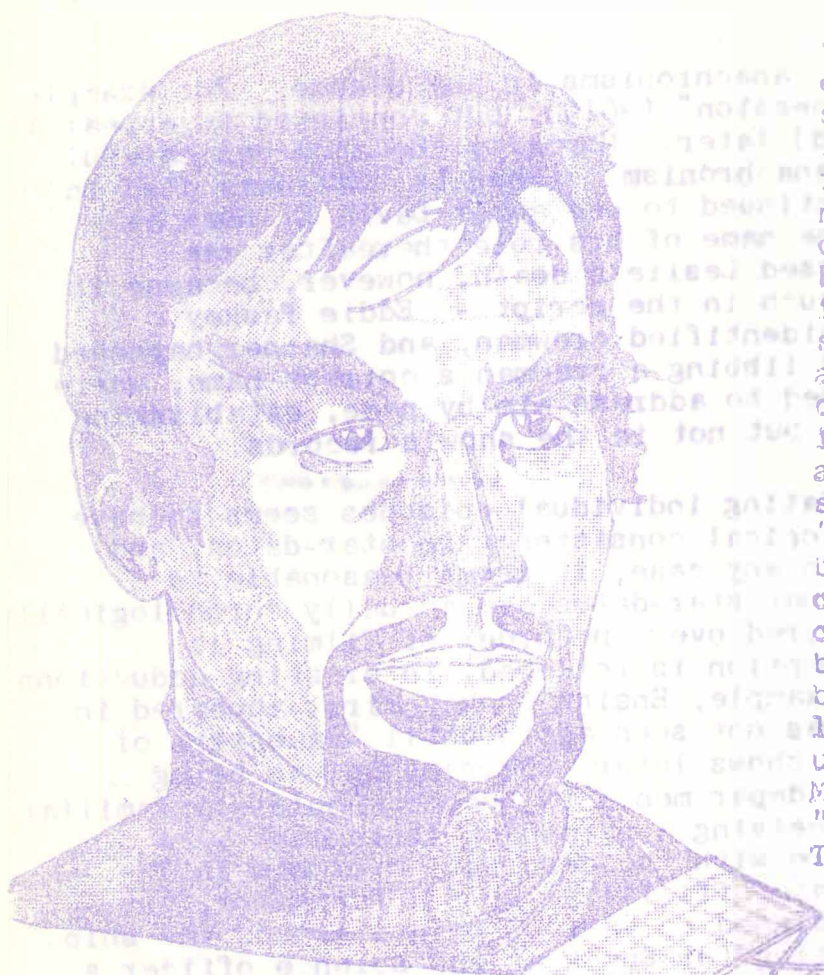
Brag Dept.: Four Quarters (La Salle College, Philadelphia PA 19141, 50¢/copy) published a short fantasy by me, "The Statement of Mrs. Thaddeus Usheon to the Press Upon Being Rescued by the Coast Guard" in the March issue.

IN P.S. STAR DATES

The "Star Trek Writer's Guide" described "stardate" as follows: "We invented 'Stardate' to avoid continually mentioning Star Trek's century (actually, about two hundred years from now), and getting into arguments about whether this or that would have developed by then. Pick any combination of four numbers plus a percentage (sic) point, use it as your story's stardate. For example, 1313.5 is twelve o'clock noon of one day and 1314.5 would be noon of the next day. Each percentage point is roughly equivalent to one-tenth of one day. The progression of stardates in your script should remain constant but don't worry about whether or not there is a progression from other scripts.... Stardates are a mathematical formula which varies depending on location in the galaxy, velocity of travel, and other factors, can vary widely from episode to episode."

The actual use of star dates in shows was not quite as slapdash as the directions to writers would suggest. For example, the Kellum de Forest Research Company commenting on "The Empath," wrote, "Star Date 1019.5 -- This star date is earlier than any ever used, it predates the pilot. To conform with current season, suggest: Star Date 5121.5"; and, on "By Any Other Name," they commented, "Star Date 3157.5 -- This star date falls within the time covered in 'The Return of the Archons.' Suggest: 4657.5."

The comment on "The Empath" suggests that Dorothy Jones is right in making "the assumption that Stardates do follow chronological order for a given ship" (Star Trek Concordance, "Introduction"). In general, references to events in the "past" (e.g., limited warfare with Klingons following the Organian Treaty of "Friend of Mercy," or Kirk's mention of his actions in "The Tholian Web" and "The Empath" in attempting to establish his identity in "Turnabout Intruder") do in fact follow the chronological order of the stardates. But it was inevitable that they would follow that order in general, because the order of the star dates tended to match the order of production. If networks had the habit of broadcasting shows in the order in which they were filmed, perhaps it would be commoner for series to indulge in serial development; as it is, shows avoid references between episodes (although, as noted above, "Star Trek" allowed some), and Roddenberry set up his explanation of "stardate" in terms that allowed him to suggest the possibility that, say, star date 2891 could come before 2337 (cf. The Making of Star Trek, p. 198). Despite the attempt at making anachronisms literally impossible, a few discrepancies can be spotted if the original order of broadcast is taken as representing the chronological order.



"Kang"

For example, in "Day of the Dove," the personal encounter of Kirk and Kang seemed likely to result in improved Federation-Klingon relationships, and, indeed, no shows filmed after "Day of the Dove" involved any Klingon hostility (Kahless in "Savage Curtain" was a simulated Klingon, not an actual one); however, "Elaan of Troyius," which did involve Klingon hostility, and which was filmed and star-dated earlier than "Day of the Dove," was broadcast later and would conflict with the apparent chronology if the order of broadcast were taken as being chronological. Similarly, Uhura wore a yellow uniform in "Corbomite Maneuver" (1512) and in "Mudd's Women" (1329).

These two shows were filmed and star-dated earlier than any of the shows in which she wore red, but they were broadcast later than some of the shows in which

she wore red, and to take the broadcast order as the chronological one would entail supposing that she twice stopped wearing red and switched briefly to yellow.

Such discrepancies as these could be explained away, no doubt, but, on the whole, following star-dates produces fewer anachronisms than does following broadcast order.

On the other hand, following the production-order involves fewer anachronisms than following the stardates. For example, Lt. De Salle, a navigator in "Squire of Gothos" (2124) and "This Side of Paradise" (3147), appeared as the assistant chief engineer in "Catspaw" (3018), apparently out-ranking Lt. Uhura; presumably, viewers were intended to suppose that he had been promoted. If the order of the star-dates is followed, one must suppose that he was merely being rotated around (to get experience in different departments, perhaps). It's a reasonable explanation, to be sure -- it also explains his being a security guard occasionally, as he is, for example, in "City on the Edge of Forever" (3134). And

there are, in any case, anachronisms in any scheme. For example, Lt. Leslie died in "Obsession" (3619), but continued to appear in shows filmed (and dated) later. Normally the show was careful to avoid that kind of anachronism. (When Lt. Galloway died in "Omega Glory," they continued to use actor David L. Ross as a minor character, but the name of his role thereafter was Lt. Johnson.) They missed Leslie's death, however, because it was not identified as such in the script -- Eddie Paskey happened to play the unidentified crewman, and Shatner happened to have the habit of ad-libbing a crewman's correct name, where possible, and so happened to address him by name, establishing his identity on-screen, but not in the show's records.

As the intent in dating individual episodes seems to have been to attempt chronological consistency in star-dates, and as anachronisms exist in any case, it seems reasonable to follow the assumption that star-dates are actually chronologically ordered and to be preferred over the order of filming as evidence. If that assumption is followed, interesting deductions become possible. For example, Ensign Chekov first appeared in "Catpaw" (3018), and was not seen again until "Gamesters of Triskellion" (3211), ten shows later. Perhaps he was being rotated around to other departments to become completely familiar with the ship before receiving a permanent assignment -- a theory which would square with the description of him in The Making of Star Trek, that "officially, he's a Navigator, but he's also able to be assigned to various points around the ship." Aside from his substituting for Spock at the science officer's computer occasionally, he was never shown at any ship-board post other than navigation.

Granting chronological order in star-dates, there remains a good deal of freedom of chronology in the statement that one "day" may be longer than another, depending on assorted factors including velocity -- "Star Trek's" only approach to a mention of the "clock paradox," the theory that one who traveled at any significant fraction of the speed of light could go many light-years in a (subjectively) short time and return to find himself, say, only a year older and his former contemporaries long dead. Stephen Whitfield called the show necessarily inaccurate on this point, but it could be argued that FTL (faster-than-light) travel would not be affected by conditions deduced from a system in which FTL travel is supposedly impossible. A clock paradox which applies to sub-light speeds would leave a variety of unusual possibilities open to super-light speeds. As the famous limerick puts it:

There was a young lady of Bright
Who traveled much faster than light.

She set out one day
In her relative way
And returned on the previous night.

"Star Trek's" assumptions
about the relations of time
and travel are more complex,
but equally outside the
confines of Einsteinian
physics. (Nowadays
there are tachyons to
wonder about, but I
have not seen any
speculations on how
the clock paradox
would affect a
tachyon.)

Granting
these suggestions
as to how star-
dates measure
what they
measure, the
question still
remains as to what
they measure. One
thing immediately obvious
is that not enough numbers
are being used to give the
complete year and day. Nor do the
numbers represent a compressed
form of representing month and
day with the year understood.
Quite apart from Whitfield's
assertion that the Terrestrial
weeks and months would be point-
less in space and so are not used,
any system involving such figures
as 7 days a week, 28/30/31 (take
your pick) days a month, or 12
months a year would make it
impossible for the numerals above
7 or $2/3$ or 1 to appear in certain
positions, and a check of star-
dates reveals an ample scattering
of 9's in all positions except
the first (and even the first
reaches 5, too high for days or
months, and a highly unlikely

Ruth
"Mudd's Women"



place for a week-indicator). For the same reason, it is impossible that the date should represent the last figure of the current year plus 2 digits to indicate week of the year and one to represent day of the week or the last figure of the current year plus 3 digits to represent which of the 365/366 days of the year it is -- or any other scheme calling for non-decimal measurements.

The only remaining possibility seems to be that the star-dates represent an accumulation of days. The days accumulated at the start of the first show, "Where No Man Has Gone Before" (1312) are too few to give a probable zero-date for the start of the calendar, add it is unlikely that the beginning of the ship's mission is the zero-date for its star-dates, because such a scheme would keep the star-dates from having direct application away from the particular ship involved. Probably the cycle of 9,999 days is held to be enough to cover most purposes (just as we are likely to refer to '71 instead of to a full 1971) -- and possibly the computer automatically adds to the logs a notation of the full star-date. For example, a full star-date of 3.6525.0 would represent 36,525 days, or approximately 100 Earth years since...since the unknown year which was set as the Federation's zero-date. It was very likely either the date of the establishment of the Federation or the date of the establishment of the Federation-wide dating system. One full cycle of 9,999 days would equal about 30 Terran years.

One obvious objection to such a system would be that it is a decimal system, and there is no reason why all the member-races of the Federation should be using base10. However, for such a system to work efficiently, one number-base or another must be chosen, and base10 is as reasonable as any other. Base12 might be more convenient, in some ways, but if most of the member-races have 10 fingers per person -- as the humans, Vulcans, and Andorians do, although the 6-fingered Tellarites do not -- base10 would probably be most convenient to the majority.

A more serious objection to such a system is the length of time involved. From "Where No Man Has Gone Before" (1312) to "All Our Yesterdays" (5943) is 4631 days -- approximately 12 years. The Enterprise is supposedly out on a five-year mission. Even if one supposes that the "years" in question are not Terran years but a conventional, decimalized year (perhaps 1,000 star-days to a star-year?), still, Kirk and his company ought to have aged perceptibly during the passage of 12 Terran years. Two possible explanations occur to me. One

is that the Enterprise may have been experiencing chiefly "short" days during that period, so that the clock paradox has taken effect, and only a few years (perhaps the three years of broadcast-time) have elapsed for the crew of the Enterprise during those 12 Terran years. Another (I think, more attractive) possibility is that the star-date standard day, despite the reference to twelve o'clock noon, is not a Terran day, but the day of some other race in the Federation, a race which also measures by multiples of 12, but which has a day only a third as long as the Terran day. Possibly, if the Tellarites made a sacrifice in accepting a decimal numbering system, in return, their day was used as the standard star-date day. Having six fingers, they may very well have a standard of counting based on 12's. In that case, the Enterprise's time out in space on its current mission comes down to a comfortable four years or so, and a full cycle of 9,999 days would equal about 10 Terran years.

Interestingly, in either case it looks as if the Enterprise must have nearly completed its five-year mission (allowing for a lapse of a few months between the start of the five years and the events in "Where No Man Has Gone Before"). Perhaps the Enterprise's next mission after the attempt to save the inhabitants of Sarpeldon in "All Our Yesterdays" was to return to Earth to be outfitted for its next five-year mission -- or perhaps a new assignment entirely.



And Who Will Guide the Blind?

a story-outline by Judy Burns

TEASER

The Enterprise cuts through deep space. On the bridge, the crew is functioning as a well trained -- almost mechanized -- unit, completing the final preparations for their mission. Reports from a neighboring system have advanced the theory that Sigma Leptrurus, an older star with one habitable planet, may be in the preparatory stage to becoming a nova. If the report is substantiated, KIRK is to remove the "Federation" colony, a group of about 900 people, for relocation.

Seated at the briefing room table, Kirk SPOCK, McCoy and SCOTT are discussing what may become a major problem -- the colonists' refusal to recognize the Federation. The alienation was brought on by the colony (what might be considered a minority group of the galaxy) settlement difficulties. They have been relocated three previous times under bitter but necessary circumstances. Kirk, himself, saw and was a part of the last transference eleven years ago while just an ensign.

The discussion is curtailed when DAVID WOODLAND enters the room carrying a portfolio and four computer cartridges. He takes his place at the head of the table; however Kirk assumes the initiative -- inquiring whether Woodland has completed his observations. If so, Kirk and his officers would appreciate results. Woodland understands the importance of Kirk's request. He opens the portfolio as he quickly summarizes his own duties on board. As they know, each year the psychological profiles on starship crews are updated. Qualified observers are moved to different ships each year to maintain peak impartiality. Woodland is experienced. This is his seventh year and seventh ship.

Kirk is still in command. Yes, they understand the policy and procedure. What report is being filed? To the point -- there are one or two crewmen on board who should be replaced -- at least temporarily. As for the officers -- on the whole highly efficient and well adjusted. Mr. Scott is perhaps too preoccupied with the mechanical, but that does not impede his performance on or off duty. Dr. McCoy is a bit on the cynical side, but -- Woodland smiles -- on the whole he is one of the most finely adapted individuals in the service. At Spock's

reaction, Woodland turns to him. The observer has had to redefine his entire scale of standards in evaluating a Vulcan. He has, however, found that the logician in Spock does not conflict with the sense of duty or purpose. MOST IMPORTANT, all three, while under extreme duress, will react predictably well on behalf of ship and crew.

Kirk is obviously pleased, but the intercom prevents any reply. SULU, on the bridge, reports that they are entering the Sigma Lepturus system. All preliminary work for the nova analysis is complete. Once again thinking of the mission, Kirk excuses himself and his officers. Woodland apologizes but firmly insists that the report is not complete. There is one last order of business -- Kirk himself. This evokes a chuckle from Scott and McCoy -- what is there to say about the captain? He is more "fit" psychologically than any of them.

As Woodland glances from face to face, expressions dim, and silence fills the room. He faces Kirk. He has found reason to believe Kirk unfit for command, and, by power of the Federation Medical Regulations, the captain is relieved of duty. On stunned reactions, we fade out.

END OF TEASER



ACT ONE

Continuation of scene. Faced by defiance and astonishment, Woodland relates his reasoning. Kirk, during moments of extreme hardship or danger, is psychologically unfit for commanding. He therefore does not command. Rather than delegating duties that might be as well performed by others, he assumes those which expose mainly himself to danger. In tying himself to jeopardy, he is endangering both crew and ship. A dead captain is a worthless captain.

McCoy and Scott lash into the observer. The charge is ridiculous. They have known Kirk since he assumed command of the Enterprise, and he has not changed since previous "observation." Spock forcefully submits that, although Kirk's decisions regarding himself and the ship have not always seemed logical, they have invariably been proven correct. Kirk, knowing he was trained to make the right decisions and feeling he has done so, nevertheless affirms that he will relinquish command on their return to starbase. Woodland rejects this, however, contending that Kirk's previous connection with this colony makes it only too likely that the captain might become personally involved. Spock will be required to take command. If he should refuse, he would be subject to courtmartial for insubordination. Kirk makes the decision. Spock will take command.

As the group breaks up, McCoy voices his sentiments. He has (to Spock's amazement) occasionally wondered about some branches of the medical service. Too much power in the position!

Sulu is observing the main viewer when Spock, Kirk, and Woodland enter the bridge. The screen reveals the ship to be moving toward a baseball-sized star. Barely visible in the foreground of the inferno is Signa Lepturus I -- a tiny scorched planet and one of the three satellites to this sun. Neither Kirk nor Spock will take the command chair. Kirk, however, with a glance toward Woodland, turns to UHURA. Has she been able to contact Signa Lepturus II? No, the planet is on the far side of the star, and intense solar activity is wreaking havoc with communications. Sulu addresses Kirk. Estimated time to nearest investigatory position -- 57 minutes. Does the captain wish to make a direct approach on this side or an approach on the colony side where communication, at least within the system, might be possible. Kirk hesitates. Woodland seizes the moment to define the situation. Spock is now in command. All comments and questions should be directed to him alone. The impact is startling. Amidst stunned expressions, Kirk exits. Spontaneously, Spock coldly wheels on the observer and makes himself understood. While

he is in command, Woodland will neither embarrass nor harass any member of this crew, and Kirk will serve in any capacity Spock deems necessary or appropriate. Woodland is dismissed. Spock orders the direct approach to position, then begins work at the library computer station. The command chair remains empty.

A few minutes later, Kirk and McCoy move down a corridor. Kirk is tormented by doubts. Suppose Woodland's diagnosis is accurate. Is this hero syndrome something they just haven't noticed before? They turn into McCoy's cabin -- the tranquil atmosphere is a contrast to Kirk's agitated state. Kirk continues. Perhaps he is just rationalizing -- but he has always been convinced that his judgment was correct even if he did endanger himself. On the other hand, could he just be satisfying a starving ego, and is it possible the need to satisfy it further would lead to their ultimate destruction? McCoy is not a psychiatrist, and the task of reassuring anyone is monumental once the seed of doubt has been sown. He reminds Kirk that they have seen other investigators as qualified as Woodland. None came up with the latter's conclusion. One obvious possibility is Woodland's own incapacity for understanding the difference between heroism for its own sake and no-choice necessity.

The discussion is interrupted by Spock's arrival. He wishes Kirk to accompany him to Engineering -- an instrumentation check out. Kirk accepts with a nod of understanding. Spock has solidified Kirk's position -- still an authority on the problem at hand. McCoy decides he has some checking out of his own to do.

In Engineering, Scott is worried that they won't have enough power to fight the star's gravitational pull at 40 million kilometers. Then there's the cooling system -- it's never been put to this kind of a test before. In fact, only one other such nova substantiation has ever occurred -- at a greater distance from the source. It was just barely successful. Whatever the pros or cons, all three realize they have little choice. Spock instructs the engineer to inform them of any gravitational flux -- always a constant danger in a nova. From the bridge, Sulu reports that they are within 70 million kilometers.

A blazing ball fills the main viewer when Kirk and Spock enter the bridge. On his way to the library computer station, Spock suggests that, captain or not, the command chair looks empty without Kirk. Together, each in his place, they begin the maneuvers necessary to collect their information.

Meanwhile, in Sickbay, McCoy reviews Woodland's medical and professional dossier. He obviously finds the material

fascinating since he barely notices CHRISTINE CHAPEL as she moves through the medical complex.

Against the fiery ball, the Enterprise moves in orbit. On the bridge, the crew is beginning to feel the heat, and tension mounts as two of the three tests have given positive results. One of Spock's fears may be only too close to reality. The gravitational variance is ominously high. Kirk knows the implications -- serious quakes on the planets and probably loss of orbit by one or all three. A rover planet would be fatal not only to the colonists but also to neighboring systems in the future.

The final observation included sending a tiny probe of anti-matter into the star. Now Scott reports he is having difficulty coping with the massive doses of energy they are receiving from surface (phospheric) activity due to the probe. Suddenly Sulu alerts them to the scanner. A huge dark area is growing on the screen -- overshadowing the brilliant light, a sunspot of incomprehensible magnitude. Indeed, in space the Enterprise has been caught in the vast fringe of a Gargantuan bursting bubble. The hull glows cherry in the heat.

Throughout the ship, crewmen suddenly grasp at their heads and eyes. On the bridge, Spock's eyes open to a blurry view. He concentrates and brings his own instruments into focus. His order to pull the Enterprise back brings no response. He moves to the helm and makes the adjustments himself, then turns to face Kirk and the rest. At his voice, glassy stares move in his direction. Reality strikes home. They are blind -- all blind.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

In space, the ship fights to turn away from Signa Lepturus as the energy bubble falls back.

In Sickbay, a bewildered McCoy jolts his panic-stricken nurse back to her senses, then admonishes her to remain exactly where she is. She is not to give any medication to anyone. McCoy stumbles toward an elevator past several hysterical crewmen -- all of whom are afflicted. Their eyes are glassy and bloodshot, and the optical area is blackened. Confusion reigns.

On the bridge, Spock has the Enterprise heading away from the star and is conferring with Engineering. Scott is as sightless as Samson, but he has enough innate feel for the ship to give Spock the correct amount of power. Kirk by now realizes that on the bridge only Spock can see. Almost instinctively he

hits the intercom to Sickbay, but the lift opens, and McCoy edges out, feeling his way toward Kirk's voice. To Kirk's questions, McCoy can give no information. He himself is blind. Possibilities are myriad -- impairment of the eye, of the optic nerves or the brain itself. Spock calculates that he has retained approximately 40% of his vision, with a general deterioration in progress. If, as seems true, the entire crew has been blinded, then McCoy is going to find diagnosis next to impossible -- impossible without Spock's remaining sight. Spock realizes that his first obligation is to get the Enterprise to Signa Lepturus II. The colonists must be removed and the planet destroyed before it rips out into space. Moreover, the only medical aid is on that colony.

Spock asks for communication status. Uhura reports it unchanged. Solar activity is jamming both regular and sub-space channels. Her loss of vision is frustrating the matter further. Spock sets himself to computerizing the orbit pattern.

Some time later the Enterprise approaches a green, ice-capped planet -- Signa Lepturus II. On board, Spock makes the necessary adjustments, and the ship orbits safely. Uhura now establishes contact with the colony -- a man named ADRIEN. Kirk's response is immediate. He should have known who would now lead. Background, ambition, motivation, and ability combined made Adrien the only possibility.

The viewer changes to the clean hard lines of a man about Kirk's own age. Except for the haunted distrustful eyes, one could mistake Adrien for a ship's captain. A metallic strip surrounds his head -- Indian band fashion. Spock informs the



colonist that they are representatives of the Federation. He requests medical assistance. Adrien bluntly refuses to allow the medical staff off the planet. Lepturians do not recognize the Federation, or didn't Spock know. Spock asks if they would allow three to beam down for medical aid -- no potential loss of the surgeons to the colony. Adrien is explicit. There will be no contact whatever with the Federation.

Kirk has heard enough. He assumes command of the interchange, bringing the look of recognition to the colonist's face. Kirk, again, after eleven years -- still ordering people about. Kirk informs Adrien that with or without medical aid the Federation has business with the colony. For its own protection he expects a representative from Signa Lepturus II on the ship within five minutes or they will begin beaming randomly on human life-forms until Adrien, himself, stands on board. Adrien sullenly agrees to be transported up. As Kirk settles back into the command chair a figure comes into focus (ours) behind him -- David Woodland. The observer grits his teeth, but says nothing. Kirk is hanging himself.

Spock activates the transporter as Kirk, McCoy, and Scott wait. Adrien and two others solidify. From the moment he steps down, Adrien comprehends the medical request. Kirk and the others, but especially Kirk, are blind! Only the Vulcan can see. The look of sweet revenge crosses the Lepturian's face. As they leave the room, Kirk catches the distinctive sound of "click." Spock informs him that the colonist's head-bands are pulled together by cords which have small metal balls on the free ends. As the balls hit together, they click. Kirk confides they have always worn the bands, but when he could see them he didn't really hear them.

All but Spock are seated in the briefing room as Kirk clarifies the situation. Signa Lepturus is going to nova soon, and its second planet is going to swing out of orbit even sooner making it a space hazard and death trap for the colonists.

Adrien laughs. A few quakes and the system is going to nova. In the past they were alienated on their home planet. THEY MOVED. They couldn't blend with another planet's ecology. THEY MOVED. The Federation had "better" use for the planet. THEY MOVED. There was a conflicting intelligent life-form on the planet not discovered until the colony was settled. THEY MOVED. Well, now they are NOT GOING TO MOVE. The ruse will not work. The only way to convince any Lepturian would be SHALROO -- not a pretty prospect for any man, especially a blind one, but perhaps Kirk would like to attempt it. If not,

the Federation has only one method of removing the group -- destroy it. Since further discussion is futile, they will see themselves to the transporters.

For his officers, Kirk describes Shalrod as the historical method of choosing the colony's leader. Few attempted it -- fewer survived. Eleven years ago a new leader was needed. Evidently Adrien survived. Spock enters, reporting the ship has received indications that renewed quakes are occurring on the planet; it will leave orbit within two or three days. They must destroy it and be far out of the system before the gravitational flux if they are to get out at all. He suggests that he and McCoy begin working on the sight problem before his own deteriorating eyesight fails completely. Before they break up Kirk draws Spock aside. He has been offered Shalrod, and if nothing else works.... Spock knows what Kirk is thinking. His logic agrees with this man, but his heart shuns the idea of losing Kirk to Shalrod or Woodland. He reminds Kirk of the psychological profile. Kirk remembers. He must think it out.

A few minutes have passed. Kirk heads down a corridor. He stops and enters at the door of his cabin. As he goes to his bunk he suddenly listens. That sound. Those clicks. He turns, on guard. Suddenly Adrien's assistant throttles him. He falls back, blind, choking.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

Continuation of scene. Kirk's natural instincts for survival and his physical prowess offset the lack of sight. He lands a telling blow on the colonist. The man crumbles. Kirk makes it to his intercom. Security to his cabin on the double.

In Sickbay, McCoy sits on the examining table. Spock stands nearby holding a piece of diagnostic equipment. They are in strong disagreement as Kirk enters. Spock is refusing on the grounds that he is neither qualified nor physically able to accomplish surgery. Kirk inquires what is going on. What progress has been made?



At the sight of blood on Kirk's face, Spock moves quickly to the captain's side. Kirk waves him off. It's nothing. One of Adrien's associates met him in his cabin. The man is now in the brig. Now, what can McCoy tell them? The surgeon outlines the situation. If Spock has used the diagnostic equipment properly (which he assumes) then there is only one diagnosis McCoy can make. The massive dose of energy they sustained penetrated their optic nerves. McCoy explains that the only solution is stimulation and regeneration -- very dangerous and requiring surgery. In addition, it must occur within 48 hours of the deterioration. Without help from the Lepturians, there is only one man capable of surgery -- Spock. He has scientific background and sight. McCoy will be the patient. With his own sight restored, he could begin work with the crew. Spock continues to refuse. The chance of success is small. Spock's vision could fail at a critical moment; with one slip he could take McCoy's life or worse he could leave him a mindless vegetable. No, he will not operate. Rather, he will obtain the medical help via Shalrod.

Kirk counters with logic. Spock's chances in Shalrod are less than his own. Kirk has, at least, seen the challenge. Without Spock's eyes, the Enterprise has little or no chance. Kirk will go down. Spock must begin surgery if it should seem Kirk has failed.

On the bridge, Kirk communicates with Adrien. On the planet, the Lepturian reacts to Kirk's voice, obviously not expecting to hear from the captain again. That is, he had considered their business completed. Woodland enters the bridge as Kirk comes to the point. He challenges Shalrod. That does not surprise the colonist. Kirk could not resist the stakes -- Lepturus for the Federation and a healthy crew for Kirk's ship. They will expect him on the hour.

Woodland approaches the command chair. He can no longer be silent. It seems that Kirk has resumed captaincy. Kirk realizes the consequences, does he not? Kirk listens wearily. Woodland has spoken with Spock. He knows exactly what Kirk has decided to do, and he must therefore demand that the ship be taken out of the system and moved to the nearest medical aid. Those below have rejected the Federation. They deserve their fate. Kirk reminds the observer that the Lepturians follow their leader. Does Woodland intend to damn the lot because of one man's embittered hold on the rest? The Enterprise's orders were specific. If it should be lost, other colonies could lose faith. What use is a Federation that doesn't protect its parts?

Woodland is frustrated and angry. Obviously Kirk has chosen his normal path -- self-gratification. The observer warns him. If by some fortune the Enterprise and Kirk survive, Kirk will

never command even a desk again. This strikes home. Kirk covers his sightless eyes with his hands and struggles with himself -- God, what alternatives.

Seated in an almost Spartan office, Adrien and two others look on as Kirk materializes. Adrien dismisses his companions. So Kirk made it past Ishal. One should have remembered how strong and clever Kirk is and was. To think that Adrien once believed in this man, Kirk, who betrayed him -- who killed his father. Kirk brought in the report that led to their relocation from the last planet -- something the old leader could not take. The Federation called it heroic failure. Adrien called it murder. But enough, Kirk faces the challenge. The "colony" is waiting.

On the ship, Spock and Scott have rigged, in McCoy's lab, a device which will control an electrochemical stimulation to Spock's eyes. Properly monitored, it could preserve the Vulcan's vision at a sufficient level for surgery, but an overstimulation could cause destruction of ganglia and brain tissue. Scott, via an auditory key, will monitor.



On the planet, Kirk stands alone in the mouth of a man-made tubular structure. His walkway through the conduit is an almost razor-edged projection, the top of which is about two feet above floor level. At any point the walkway could collapse, allowing him to lose balance and fall to the wall of the structure -- wall coated with an element corrosive to organic matter. Adrien's voice echoes through the passage. As long as Kirk's feet remain on the walkway, the cameras on the overhead light bar will remain activated. If he should fall, no one will want to watch.

Two viewing screens are tuned to the main attraction...Adrien's and McCoy's in Sickbay. Gathered in Sickbay are Spock, Scott, McCoy, Christine, and Woodland.

All are tense as Spock explains much of the above information for them and us. Suddenly something is very wrong.

In the passage, balance is a relative thing. The planet is being racked with quakes. As Kirk fights to maintain a foothold we fade out.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

In Adrien's office the quake goes almost unnoticed as the Lepturian watches Kirk's struggle. He mutters, "You forgot the quakes, James Kirk. A minor settling of the land, but too much for you. Fall, blast you! Fall!"

Spock, in Sickbay, is also aware of what is happening. Holding his emotions in tight rein, he narrates. The captain is fighting not only Shalrod and his own lack of sight but the imbalance of the whole system. On the viewer, Kirk suddenly hunches as if to leap. The screen blackens and does not activate again. If McCoy is ready, Spock will begin.

In the tunnel, a "strange" thing has occurred. Kirk is (of course) still very much alive. He holds tenuously to the slender light bar that runs the length of the passage. His feet are about 10 inches from the threadline top of the walkway. The light bar is hot, but he knows that releasing himself would be certain death. Gritting, he inches along the upper portion of the passage.

On the ship, something else not quite expected has occurred. The colonist has managed to escape from the brig. Now he runs down a corridor colliding with any crewmen in his way.

In Sickbay, Spock is working over an unconscious McCoy. The only indication that Spock's eyes are being aided is a small metal disk on the temporal region of the head. Christine assists with the medical instruments. Scott and Woodland stand near the monitoring unit in McCoy's lab. A steady hum emanates from the machine. It increases in pitch slightly, and Scott compensates by turning a dial. Suddenly a security alert runs through the ship -- someone has discovered the colonist is missing.

Below, Adrien is about to call the Enterprise when he is informed that Kirk is still alive; they have life-form readings on him near the end of Shalrod. Anger and astonishment battle for his face. He moves quickly out of the room.

Meanwhile, Spock strains over McCoy. In the lab, Scott and Woodland are as before. Abruptly the lab door moves aside, and the escaped Lepturian enters. He runs through the lab to the surgery, immediately comprehending the situation. Spock, seeing the intruder but unable to leave McCoy, calls to Scott. As the latter reacts, he is thrown back by a felling blow. Woodland has been back as far as possible from the shuffle, trying to make himself inconspicuous.

The monitoring unit has gone insane as Scott defends himself. Pain racks Spock's visage, causing an involuntary cry. As Christine realizes what is taking place, she tries to rip off the disk-like connecting link with the machine. Spock pushes her off. The unit is McCoy's only hope. Spock attempts to control the pain. Christine runs to the lab. Woodland is there, and by heaven he has got to do something. If he can't monitor the unit, then he has got to free Scott. He, not Scott, Christine, or Spock, has got to do it. There is no one to do it but himself. Suddenly the realization of no-choice necessity hits him. He understands Kirk. Moving in the direction of the action, he grapples for the clothes and the now remembered clicks that accompanied the colonists. Scott works himself free and gains the monitor level, managing to adjust it before being pulled into the struggle again. The Lepturian is felled by Scott only after the former has struck Woodland unconscious. Checking with Spock, Scott finds the Vulcan able to complete the operation. McCoy and others will see again.

Down on the planet, Adrien awaits Kirk at the end of Shalrod. Having come to the end of the light bar, Kirk swings out and lands in the clear. Adrien is incensed. Kirk has resorted to deception. Kirk points out that a man must merely survive Shalrod. There is no right or wrong method...just as there are no rights or wrongs to a lot of things. One works to the best possible conclusion, whatever that might involve. Now Kirk expects Adrien to organize his people for evacuation. And, Kirk promises, everything that is humanly possible will be done to ensure that their next home is a permanent one.

On the bridge, almost two days later, the personnel are nearly back to normal. All have the use of their eyes. Spock and McCoy stand near Kirk's command chair. Kirk has been given a clean bill of health from a recovering Woodland. The latter is recuperating from a broken jaw and a slight hero complex. As to what was in the observer's background that caused his original decision, McCoy could find nothing. Woodland was just a human version of Spock in that one respect -- too logical for all their goods. Kirk interrupts the conversation to issue a command to Sulu -- detonate Signa Lepturus II. On the main viewer there is a distant burst of light. Spock notes that someday soon there will be another explosion -- one that will make this like the extinguishing of a candle. But, McCoy adds, the universe will go on as will the people in it.

The ship banks and moves off into space.

THE END



Sean Kenny as
Lt. De Paul, relief
navigator. Kenny also
played the crippled
Captain Pike in the
"present-time" sequences
of "The Menagerie."

AT 72

Marginal Existence

by Connie Reich Faddis

Gorshim had called to say that he had found a live humanoid in one of the sleeper-units, and then his transmission had been cut off. McCoy hurried now to the coordinates of that transmission, through the vine- and brush-overgrown city, past the rusting sleeper-units that now contained nothing but crumbled bones and plastic intravenous tubes and traces of unknown drugs. The doctor estimated now that the remains were perhaps only a few hundred years old. It was incredible to imagine, even so, that some of the inhabitants of the sleepers could still be living, even if the units were actually designed for hibernation; McCoy still doubted it. He reflected that the little exploratory-survey team had uncovered not only a rich archeological find, but perhaps a great medical one as well -- which was much better and more practical, to his mind.

When he came in sight of the partially corroded structure which seemed to be the site of the coordinates, McCoy checked the time: only six hours until rendezvous with the Enterprise. That meant only two hours left to investigate whatever was inside the building, collect the rest of the survey team, and get back to the shuttlecraft. Damn, he thought, not enough time to extract a tooth, let alone make a decent examination.

He hesitated before entering the building; any man who made surveys of unknown places learned to hate entering enclosures. He called out for Gorshim, and then for Vigeland, the geologist who was supposed to be with him, and waited for long minutes without an answer before he slipped inside the hallway, phaser ready. When his eyes were sure of the changed light, he gazed sharply at the row of sleepers, then hurried over to them, pulling out his tricorder.

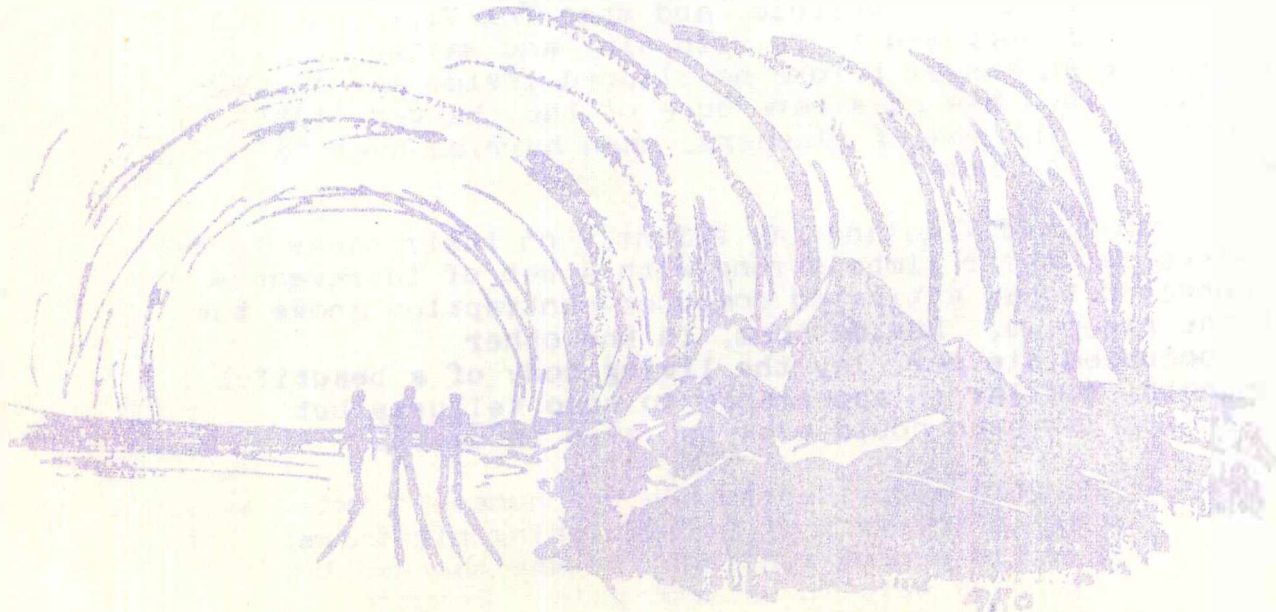
Lt. Gorshim and Vigeland lay silently on their backs in two of the sleepers, their limbs strung with a web of intravenous tubes connected to an activated computer-contraption above the lids of the sleepers. Beside them, in the other occupied sleeper, lay the living body of a beautiful male humanoid, similar in appearance to homo telluris but paler than any Earthman could ever be, even in death.

McCoy was further surprised to see the humanoid twist weakly and grimace, as if in the grip of a frightening nightmare. When the doctor checked his sensor readings, he was shocked to find that all three sleepers were in extreme pain. Gorshim's and Vigeland's life-function readings were alarmingly low. McCoy

immediately became the physician again. He worked the catch on sleeper's glass compartment until it opened, and carefully began to remove the intravenous needles from Vigeland's arteries. His life-readings dipped. McCoy dug out his hypospray and injected a heart stimulant. Vigeland responded, moaning. The doctor slapped him gently to bring him to. "Vigeland. Lieutenant, what happened? Wake up, man!"

The sound of his voice cut across the intense silence of the metal-lined room. There was a reflection off the walls: metal gleaming on metal and a quick flashing of automated motion behind him. Icy metal gripped McCoy and pinned him, struggling but helpless, into a vacant sleeper, among the dust of the former occupant. Stinging. Glass. Pain...

Spock was reluctant to go down. The Enterprise was about to take the group of astro-physicists from Starbase Six, with their fascinating new instruments, to measure and record that rarity among celestial events, a supernova. Even a Klingon ship was racing to observe and scan the phenomenon, though Spock suspected their motives to be something less than wholly scientific. Still, as the captain had reminded him, it was essentially a routine scanning mission, one which Scotty could handle easily in their absence. And McCoy had never missed a rendezvous; he must be in trouble.



The city must have been beautiful at one time, but now much of the metal had lost its gleam and taken on the dulled brown of barbed wire on ancient battlefields. The glass was dusty and splintered. The jungle had invaded everywhere, its roots crumbling the concrete into soil. The silence was startling. Nurse Chapel stayed as close to Mr. Spock as was inconspicuously possible. There were a few insects which, unfortunately, found the intruders edible and began to bite, but only the insects' buzzing and their own breathing disturbed the quiet.

Kirk slapped at a bug and almost jumped at the sound. "This must have been one hell of a city, Spock," he said, to break the silence.

Spock pointed out from under the survey team's shuttlecraft. It had been easy to find; McCoy, whatever else Spock might think of him, was an excellent officer, and the shuttle's recognition beam had been left on automatic transmission. "No mechanical reasons to explain the survey team's failure to rendezvous, Captain," he reported. "We must assume that they encountered difficulties which prevented their return to the shuttlecraft. The logical place for us to search would probably not be in this section of the city. Indeed, there is no guarantee that they are in the city at all; they could be anywhere within a radius of approximately 160 kilometers, given the four days they have been here on foot."

Kirk stared thoughtfully at the distant brilliance in the noon sky. The supernova was a good distance away, but it rivaled the noon sun. The two lights blurred the shadows in the canyons of the streets and made vision difficult. Kirk turned back and inspected his landing party: Spock, Nurse Chapel, Ensign Chekov. He nodded at the first two. "Follow this street south. Mr. Chekov, you and I will head east at the intersection. We'll take it a 'block' at a time and keep in contact by communicator."

Both groups found the glass coffins with their corpses as they explored. There were, it seemed, at least several of the units in every building, all containing ancient, disintegrated bodies. Spock estimated them to be 415.6 years old, others not as old, and none recent. He guessed that the units had been designed for suspended animation.

Kirk fingered one of the plastic tubes hanging down from the machine overhead where he stood. It was sticky with age and adhered to his fingers. "Looks like medical equipment, all right," he agreed. "It could have been intended for life-support during some sort of cataclysm -- or plague, maybe. Could this city have been some sort of hospital-complex?"

"Possible, Captain," Spock's voice answered from the communicator. "The equipment in this structure appears to have terminated its functioning somewhat more recently than those which you have described, and, indeed, the condition of the machinery has been improving as I continue south. I calculate that corpses here, too, are more recently dead -- approximately three centuries old."

It was then that Nurse Chapel found the footprints -- and their owner.

Kirk stared with disbelief at the naked youth cowering in the corner where Spock and the nurse had confined him. He seemed no older than 14, but his musculature was that of a full-grown, hard-working adult; his eyes peered out from under the uncut hair with a gleam of animal cunning.

"He hasn't made a sound since I first saw him, Captain," Christine Chapel reported. "I'm not sure he can."

"He was armed with a metal bar which he uses quite capably as a club," Spock added. "I believe that he would have killed me quite easily had not Miss Chapel's cries warned me. The sound seemed to frighten him immeasurably."

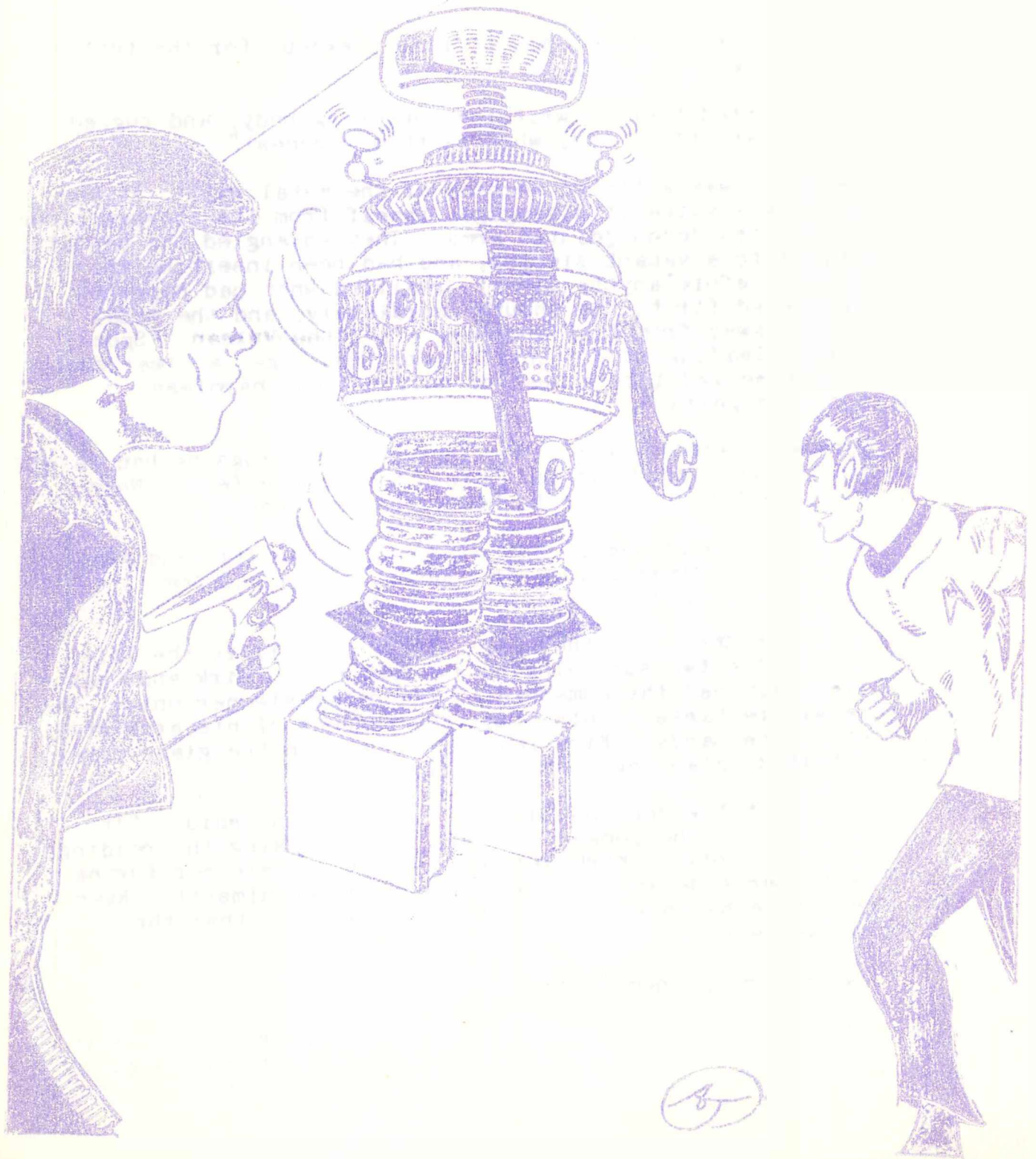
Chekov approached the wild man, who snarled soundlessly and backed further into his corner. "He may know something about survey team, Captain. He may even be one of the ones who killed them."

Kirk frowned. "We have no evidence that the team is dead, Mr. Chekov. But there are bound to be others like him; keep your phasers where you can reach them."

"Captain," added Spock, "when this man attacked me, it was obviously not in self-defense, yet Miss Chapel's voice incapacitated him with fear. I strongly doubt that he has heard voices before. Observe him." The wild man cowered against the wall each time they spoke. "I have never known Dr. McCoy to refrain from speech for more than a few minutes at a time, and I doubt that this man has had any contact with him."

"Well, I can't see any reason to keep him captive," Kirk said. "But from now on we'll stay together." Kirk went on down the street, southward, and the others followed him.

It was not long before they intersected a dirty alley and found bootprints in the dust. They broke into a run and soon entered the metal-lined room where the survey team was stretched



not like dead men in the glass coffins,, except for the tubing attached to them.

Kirk spotted McCoy's writhing, sweating body, and tugged the glass cover off. "God, what is this! Bones!"

The robot was a fitted section of the metal wall. At the sound of Kirk's voice it disengaged itself from its storage place and extended its dozen jointed arms. They entangled the captain, shoved him into a vacant sleeper, and had been inserting the unit's hypos before anyone clearly realized what had happened. Spock recovered first. He shouted wordlessly, and the metal robot turned away from Kirk and came after the Vulcan. Spock backed away, leading it off until Chekov could get a clear shot. The robot dissolved into a heap of half-melted, harmless capacitors and gears.

Kirk was dazed by even the light dose of drugs he had received. Spock and Chekov freed him and helped him to his feet. Nurse Chapel, meanwhile, had gone to McCoy and the others.

"Lt. Gorshin is dead," she reported. "Lt. Vigeland and Dr. McCoy are in great pain. Mr. Spock, you've had some medical training; please assist me."

Under her direction, they were able to stabilize the life-functions of the two surviving humans somewhat. Kirk and Chekov, meanwhile, examined the humanoid in the other sleeper unit. The creature was restless in his coma, the tendons of his arms straining against the bands. Kirk reached to unlatch the glass cover, then hesitated, glancing at Nurse Chapel.

"I don't think you should open it, sir," she said. "It might kill him." She looked down again, rechecking the readings on McCoy's tricorder. Kirk did not disturb the sleeper further, but came to her side and looked at the readings himself. Even with the little he knew of medicine, he could see that the condition was serious.

"Can you help them?" Kirk asked the nurse.

She resheathed a hypospray, glanced at Spock, and then at Kirk. "No," she said miserably. "I can't even begin to guess what those units pump into the bloodstream. I gave them strong sedatives, and that seems to help, but I wouldn't dare try anything else at this time."

"It would be wise to take them to the shuttle. The doctor left a considerable stock of instrumentation; we may be able to analyze the drug and produce an antidote," said Spock.

"We couldn't make it before dark," said Kirk, "and that would make us an easy mark for an ambush. Too dangerous. Perhaps --"

The native they had met before burst in at the doorway, aimed again with the metal bar with which he had tried to brain Spock. He was followed by seven or eight others, both male and female, all similarly armed.

Kirk motioned for silence and drew his phaser, setting it to stun; the others did the same. They stood waiting. The natives scattered across the entrance, crouching cautiously, ready to attack or run. The first youth stepped in a wary semi-circle around Spock to glance at the section of wall from which the robot had come, then kicked at the half-melted heap of its remains. Without warning, he raised his club and smashed the coffin and the face of the comatose alien. Then he aimed for Vigeland's unconscious body, but found Spock suddenly in his way. The two groups threw themselves at each other. Kirk stunned one of his attackers, then uncurled a young woman's strangling fingers from his throat. She bit his hand and fled, and her companions broke and ran after her.

The room was still again. Kirk surveyed the results of the struggle. Three of the natives lay unconscious. Chekov was leaning against a wall, holding his left arm. Christine Chapel quickly went to him.

Spock turned back from the doorway. "They have withdrawn, Captain. They do not exhibit signs of turning or regrouping. I do not think they will return for a considerable time, though that, of course, is speculation."

"Mr. Chekov's wrist is broken," Chapel reported. She was already rigging a splint.

"He yelled when I hit him," said Chekov, a little fuzzy with pain. "He said 'ouch' -- I mean -- the equivalent. Clear as Antares cymbals. He spoke."

"Yes," commented Spock, "I heard him too." He raised his eyebrows. "That alters my theory significantly. It is now logical to assume that at least a considerable portion of the more recent corpses in the damaged glass units which we examined previously were damaged during similar native forays. It is now doubly imperative that we find and awaken another live alien and attempt to communicate with him. More than two lives depend on our solving this enigma."

Chekov and the nurse stayed with the delirious patients and guarded the bound natives. Chekov improvised fortifications

around the door and electrified them after the departure of Kirk and Spock, then covered the ruined body of the alien with wilted plastic sheeting scavenged from a connecting room, and then wandered restlessly around the darkened rooms. "It is past sundown already. I wish the captain and Mr. Spock had waited until daylight to go out," he complained.

Christine Chapel unclamped her stiff fingers from McCoy's sweaty ones and stood up wearily. She checked the tricorder readings of the two unconscious crewmen. "No change," she informed Chekov. She dabbed the sweat from her patients' faces and spoke comfortingly to Vigeland, who was mumbling deliriously.

Chekov walked over to the bound prisoners and sat down on his heels in front of the nearest. "You know what this is all about," he told him, "but you won't tell us. Maybe you don't know about language. I wonder how you communicate with each other? Maybe," he answered his own question, "you are touch-telepaths, like Vulcans." He put out his good hand to the man's head, but the native only shrank himself back against the wall, staring with obvious terror at Chekov's lips. "They're not touch-telepaths," he announced.

"I saw the one that killed the alien use very fast hand-signals when he was looking for the robot in the wall," Chapel offered.

"Hand-signs," Chekov mused. "And the first thing they did, even before they bothered with us, was to check for the robot. I wonder...the robot...."

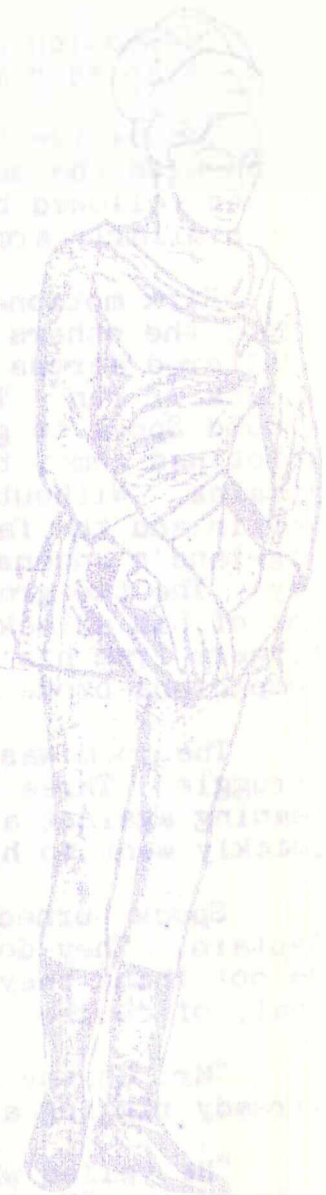
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"The robot?" said Kirk incredulously.

"Indeed, Captain. I believe that is why the natives do not speak. They would appear to have been killing the occupants



of the sleeper units for five hundred years -- although I cannot so far deduce their reasons for doing so. It is impossible to estimate the exact time without further data, but the age of the remains located by us earlier -- "

"And the robots?" said Kirk, interrupting the digression.

"The robots are the guardians -- or possibly the jailers -- of the sleepers. They respond to the sound of the humanoid voice and to that only, so far as we have seen. The robot we found did not attack you until it scanned your exclamations upon discovering Dr. McCoy, and it directed its actions against you only, until I distracted it by using my voice. I was in error not to have deduced that aspect of its operation at the time."

"And the natives have learned that they are safe from the interventions of the robot as long as they don't use their voices," Kirk added. "But that still doesn't explain why they want to kill the sleepers."

"Their motive is temporarily unimportant. What we must secure is the consciousness and possibly the assistance of one of the sleepers. He may know, or at least be able to direct us to the chemical formulae of the substances injected by the units; using the shuttlecraft's computer, we may be able to construct an effective antidote for our crewmen."

"That means we'll have to contend with another robot," said Kirk thoughtfully. "And you'll want to examine it." He squared off his shoulders. "I'll be the bait, and you phaser it. Then we'll see what we can do to bring one of the aliens around."

It was not difficult to find another occupied room. Apparently, the primitives had murdered methodically over the centuries, and they had reached the fringe of the most recent activity. The buildings were not yet devastated as those to the north were. Kirk glanced around the darkened room until he located the fitted section of wall that was the storage space for the robot. There were two sleepers in the room, both occupied. There was one robot. Kirk's mind suppressed the memory of what had occurred with the first robot. He did not draw his phaser. Facing Spock, who crouched beside one of the sleepers, he said clearly, "Ready or not, Spock, here it comes."

And it came. It launched itself at the captain, even though he backed quickly away. It followed him and reached him. It was cold; it was around him, with fingers of steel ice, and it put him down on top of someone. Then the needles. Kirk screamed.

When he came to, Spock was crouched in the center of stacks of printed circuits, wires, switches, resistors, capacitors, and cores. The Vulcan glanced down at him. "I trust you are feeling better, Captain."

Kirk closed his eyes. The robot reared up behind them and -- Kirk opened his eyes, shuddering, and saw that he was lying on the floor and that the electronic paraphernalia heaped around Spock were the carefully sorted remains of the thing. "That was too close," he commented drily.

"My apologies, Captain. However, I have determined a number of new possibilities. One is the probability that the robots' original purpose was to confine an awakened sleeper, not necessarily to prevent intruders. Also, the robot is not programmed to monitor the life-support devices; it attempted to place you in a unit, despite the fact that it already contained a living occupant."

"It thought I was a sleeper who somehow awakened?"

"It appears so."

Kirk pulled himself up and gazed down at the alien bodies imprisoned in the glass coffins. "But who put them here? What's the point of all this sophisticated gadgetry?"

"The gadgetry is not truly sophisticated," Spock said. "The robot is no more than a single-purpose peripheral device for some central directive mechanism, probably a simple computer. The robot itself is only semi-solid-state, and the computer which directs it cannot be more advanced than...a ferrite-core digital device, such as the primitive T'YORIC 3, or, in your history, a mid-twentieth century IBM 360/75. I should like to examine the control mechanism of the sleeper units. If, as I suspect, they are controlled by the same computer, the re-programming of that computer will be all that is necessary to release the remainder of the sleepers."

"We still need the antidote for our men."

"The central computer should have all such data in its library. However, it would expedite the translation of the data if I were to learn the language of these persons. And we must, in any case, determine if they can be successfully awakened."

"You want to wake one of the sleepers."

"Exactly."

Kirk stared down at the almost translucent forms under the glass. "It might kill them to free them, Spock. But leaving them here for the primitives to murder isn't much to my taste, either. I think we can risk it with one."

"The mental contortions by which you arrive at logical decisions never cease to amaze me, Captain."

Kirk raised the glass lid over the sleeping alien, a female. Spock touched an artery in her neck. "It is fascinating that these humanoids have survived five centuries at such an active metabolic rate. This drug may be a great medical breakthrough in retarding the aging process." As he spoke he removed the needles and tubes.

There was no reaction. Spock checked the woman's pulse. It had quickened slightly. She opened her eyes. Then she took a long, shuddering breath and screamed. The shrieks echoed through the rusting walls. Instinctively, Kirk pressed her to his shoulder. "Wake up! You're safe now!"

If she understood his tone, it was not reaching her. Her mind was trapped in the nightmares she had endured. Spock wrapped one large hand around her wrist, and the other he pressed to her temple. Kirk hesitated, and then stepped away.

The woman's orange eyes went blank. Spock's eyes widened and then went blank. Their faces faded to grey ash. The Vulcan's face suddenly contorted, and he seemed to have trouble breathing. Both began to choke. The woman was turning blue.

Spock, unable to break the link, strained to speak. "J--jim" he gasped.

Kirk tore the Vulcan's cold hands away from the dying alien. He eased Spock to the floor and shook him. Spock snapped into a fetal pose and lay still, not breathing. Kirk unclenched Spock's fists and forced them to his own temples. "Spock!" he shouted, aloud.

A single flame traced a path through every nerve. He cried out and fell to the floor.

* * *

Kirk opened his eyes. Ensign Chekov's face maneuvered into his view.

"Captain! Miss Chapel, the captain is conscious!" Chekov helped Kirk to sit up.

"Spock. Where's Spock? What am I doing here?" He glanced around the room in which McCoy and the research team had been found. They were still there, with the native prisoners stashed away at the far end of the room.

"Mr. Spock carried you here, sir," Christine Chapel answered. "He said to tell you that he had recovered and that he was going to find the -- computer? -- and then get to the shuttlecraft and bring it here. It's almost light outside. What happened to you, sir? Mr. Spock looked terrible."

"A proxy dose of what the sleepers get." Kirk stood up and looked at McCoy and Vigeland. "They look better."

"Yes, sir," she said. "A few hours ago they suddenly began improving."

"Spock found the computer," said Kirk, and stood quietly musing.

"Look!" said Christine. The Columbus appeared between the roofs, settling in the middle of the street.

Kirk, swaying a little as he moved, began to wrestle McCoy free of the sleeper unit. Christine hurried to assist him, and Kirk nodded to Chekov to start on Vigeland.

"What about the prisoners, sir?" Chekov asked.

Kirk glanced at them. They seemed to have gotten over their fright and had assumed expressions of malevolence. "Leave them here. Their friends will find them."

Spock entered, and the four of them carried McCoy and Vigeland away. Outside, Chekov gazed up at the sky through the tangle of overgrowth. The nova was there. Its brilliance, added to the planet's own sun, forced the shadows of the artificial canyons into abnormal darkness. The shadows were inky coldness; the sunlight was searing. One shadow molded itself into a staggering form, trailing wires and tubes from the splintered-glass door as it swayed into the stark daylight. It laughed insanely, joyously, hopelessly. It collapsed into a quiet heap. Inside, its robot remained wallbound and ignorant, in the shadows and rust. There were more sounds. They were in praise of death and of freedom.

The group stumbled hurriedly across the street and into the shuttlecraft.

"They had been in agony for the better part of five centuries," the Vulcan said, "as the planet fell away beneath them. Too much pleasure becomes a terrible torture."

"Pleasure?" said Kirk. "Do you mean to tell me those people put themselves in the sleeper units?"

"If I have interpreted correctly the information from the central computer," Spock's tone denied the possibility of a mistake.

"It looks as if an entire civilization retired -- or escaped -- from their way of life into drugged pleasure," McCoy commented. "But in time the sensation became agony. And they couldn't escape."

"Pleasure," Kirk repeated the word. "You didn't seem to like it."

"A slight difference in metabolism, Captain," Spock said.

"Slight?" said Kirk.

McCoy shivered, and Vigeland stared at the wall.

"The primitives, then," Spock put in, diverting their attention. "were either escapees, or ... were descended from those who refused to take part in the general retreat --"

"Cop-out," suggested McCoy.

"Very well, Doctor," Spock acceded to avoid bickering. "In either terminology, those original nonconformists not only gave up language for their own safety, but formed the ritual murdering of the sleepers."

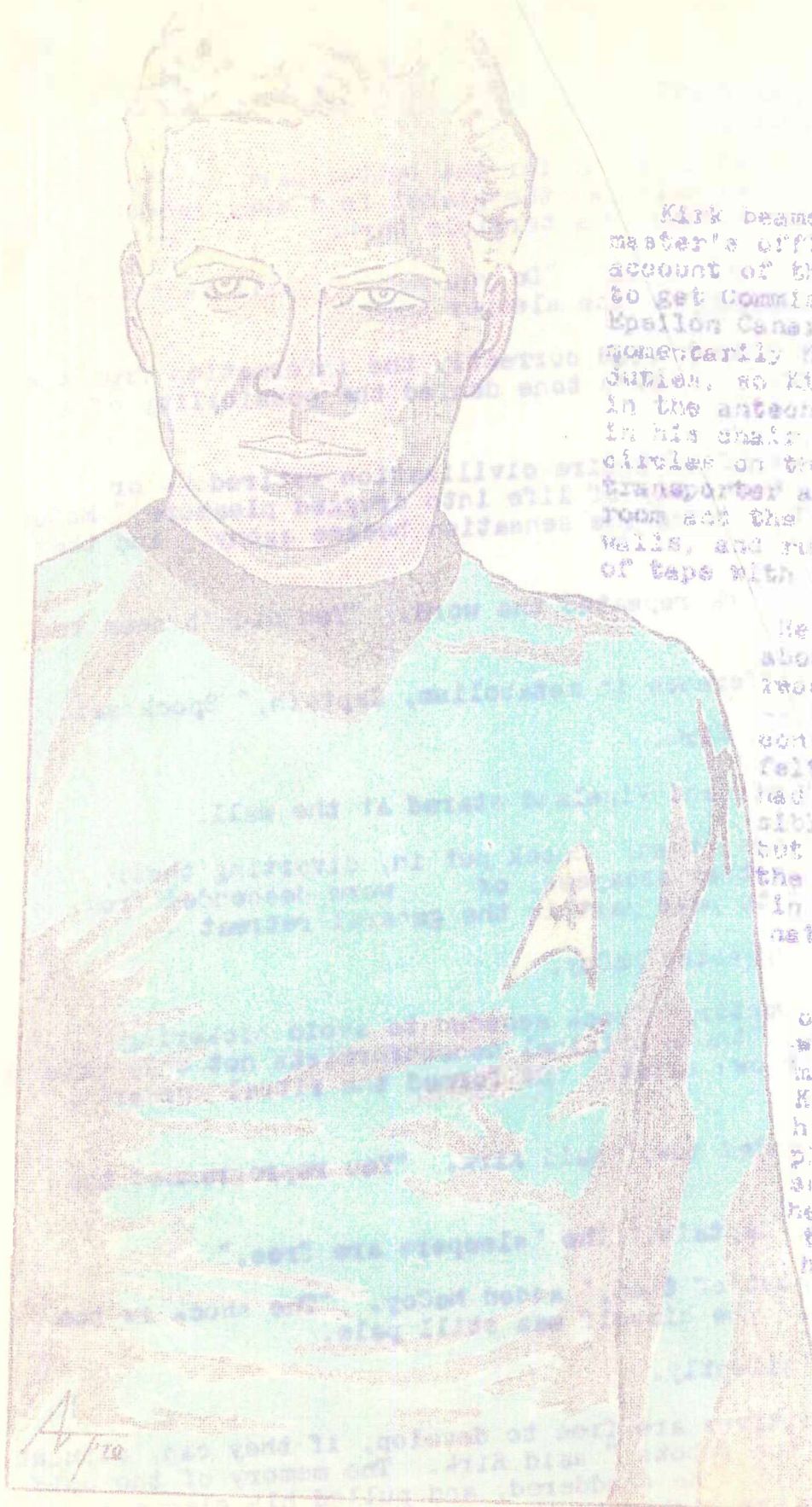
"But that's ended now," said Kirk. "You reprogrammed the central computer!"

"Affirmative, Captain. The sleepers are free."

"And dying, most of them," added McCoy. "The shock is too much to adjust to." He himself was still pale.

Spock nodded silently.

"And the primitives are free to develop, if they can, without interference from the robots," said Kirk. The memory of the cold grasp returned to him. He shuddered, and pulled his glance away from the planet to the lights in the darkness ahead of them. One of the lights was the Enterprise.



Kirk beamed down to the postmaster's office to turn in his account of the Enterprise's failure to get Commissioner Bedford to Epsilon Canaria Three. Stone was momentarily detained by other duties, so Kirk sat down to wait in the antechamber. He fidgeted in his chair, gazing idly at the circles on the floor of the transporter at one end of the room and the paintings on the walls, and rubbing the corners of tape with his report together.

He was not worried about Star Fleet's reaction to the failure -- for once in his busy, conscientious life he felt sure that the State had over-riden any possible mortal effort. But he felt envious of the Commissioner's delight in her involuntary reintegration from space.

The carpet was ornately patterned with a stylized schematic of the Galaxy. Kirk tried to distract himself by rapping his places he had been and succeeded so well that he did not notice that the room's outer door had opened until the newswoman spoke.

"That's right," she startled him. "I mean, Captain Kirk."

Kirk turned.

for the cushioning of the chair which concealed his start. Yeoman Janice Rand stood inside the door.

"Hello. It's good to see you," Kirk said, rising and taking refuge in courtesy.

"How have you been, Captain?" she answered in the same tone.

"Fine. And you?"

"Fine."

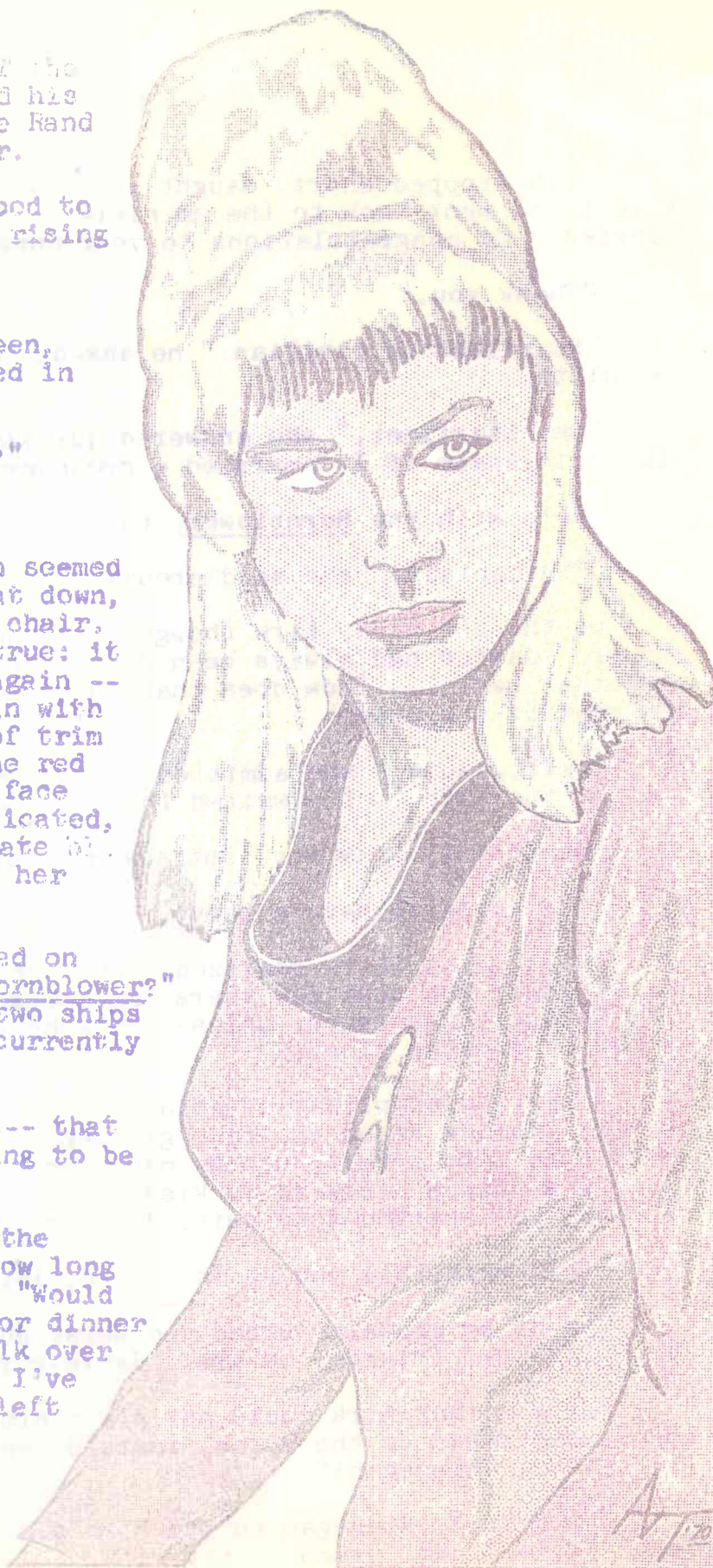
The conversation seemed at an end. Janice sat down, and Kirk resumed his chair. The commonplace was true: it was good to see her again -- a short, shapely woman with a surprising length of trim leg extending from the red yeoman's tunic. Her face was round and uncomplicated, except for the intricate blonde basketweave of her hairdo.

"Are you stationed on the Harambee or the Hornblower?" he asked, naming the two ships (other than his own) currently in orbit.

"The Hornblower -- that is -- I was. I'm going to be staying here, now."

That saved Kirk the necessity of asking how long she would be ashore. "Would you like to meet me for dinner tonight? We could talk over old times. You know, I've missed you since you left the --"

"I don't know if my husband would approve."



Kirk stopped short, caught in a vacuum. He cleared his throat and went back to the amenities. "I didn't know you were married. My congratulations to your husband."

"Thank you."

"Starfleet or civilian?" he asked. A show of interest would be polite.

"Oh, Starfleet," she answered quickly. "I couldn't have stayed in space if I'd married a grounder."

"He's with the Hornblower, too, I take it."

"The captain," she said proudly.

On the one hand, Kirk thought, he should have expected that answer. Janice had always been set on getting a captain. On the other hand.... "How does that work out? No problems with the rest of the crew?"

"Well...some," she admitted. "But that's not why I'm leaving the ship." She waited for Kirk to ask why.

He suddenly knew why, but asked to please her.

"I'm going to have a baby!"

Which meant, Kirk realized, that she was out of Star Fleet for at least the next few years and would see her husband only when he could get leave, unless she sent the child away to be raised by someone else.

A man-shaped pillar of gold appeared in the room's transporter. Janice stood up, face glowing. The gold faded away and turned into a tall, stocky man with a bulky thatch of sandy hair, who stepped forward to kiss his wife. "Well, and have you found an apartment to suit, Jan?" he said.

"Yes, wait till you -- Oh, Sean, let me introduce you -- "

The other captain turned and burst out laughing. "Ah, no, Jan. It's old friends, we are. Jamie-boy, how are you?"

For a moment Kirk could not place him. He closed his eyes and concentrated on the voice, instead, and recognition burst in on him. "Finnegan!"

"Himself." Finnegan pumped Kirk's hand. "It's been too long, Jamie." He turned to his wife. "Jan, the pranks we used to pull -- "

"We?" That was not the way Kirk remembered it.

Finnegan rushed on unheeding. "Jamie was the smartest lower classman ever to grace the Academy, I'll take my oath, Jan. Do you know, this babe-in-arms made captain three years ahead of me?" He laughed again and shook his head. "Three years! Not that he didn't deserve to, mind!"

The room's inner door slid open, and Portmaster Stone came out. "Sorry to have kept you waiting, Captain," he began. He saw the other man, then. "Captain Finnegan, were you here to see me?"

"No, no, I thank you. I was after meeting my wife here. Listen, Jamie, we'll get together when you've more time."

Kirk nodded blankly.

Finnegan tucked his wife's arm under his own and whirled her out. He turned at the door to wave cordially, and then the couple was gone.

"Are you all right?" Stone asked, looking at Kirk closely.

"Yes." Kirk forced himself to turn away from the door. "Just feeling lonely."

"That comes with the territory, Captain," Stone said somberly. "Come in."

OLD-TIME REVIEWS

Variety, Sept. 25, 1968, "TV Reviews," p. 49, by Mor.

"Star Trek" has drifted far demographically since its days as kid fare and has now made the transition complete with a move into the late hours. It retains its vigor and spatial spookiness, although its chief characters are largely caricatures and the dialog tends to turgidity. However, for males of all ages at least, it also retains a bevy of shapely femmes in tight and revealing space suits and enough conflict to accommodate the action-happy.

"The premer was a trifle more morbid than previous ventures. In it a statuesque spacewoman snares the brain out of Mr. Spock's (Leonard Nimoy) head to serve as the intelligence for a retarded female tribe on an obscure planet. James Kirk (William Shatner) sets out to put body and brain together, and succeeds despite great femme dimwit resistance and a perilous and overlong brain replacement operation.

The best part of the show continues to be the sets and special effects, an impressive array of blinking and beeping gadgets.

Daily Variety, Sept. 23, 1968, "TV Reviews," p. 14, by Murr.
First show of third season served to focus on Leonard Nimoy's character, and gave some attention to DeForest Kelley, the space ship medic. Both thespians are "also" stars of the series, toplined by William Shatner. With a feature film one year old on CBS by the time 'Trek' begins, and 'Judd' one season younger on ABC, there may be some erratic orbits this year for Gene Roddenberry's creation.

Lee Cronin's script had Mary Dussay, looker from a primitive planet, steal Nimoy's brain. On her planet, one healthy brain runs the show for the underground femmes, the regressive males banished to the surface. Nimoy's body was present, eventually reconnected to the brain. His voice was heard regularly.

There wasn't much director Mary Daniels could do with this talky script. Shatner, reactive in the extreme, Kelley, unrestrained, and others went through the motions, all too aware that Nimoy's brain would be recovered. Since they never seemed afraid, why should a viewer?

Production-wise, show remains strong. Walter M. Jeffries' art direction, and Westheimer Prods.' special effects maintain interest. The story department could use some after-burners, however. Or, maybe space simply isn't too exciting anymore. Other technical credits on preem were pro."

The Hollywood Reporter, Oct. 14, 1968, "Television Reviews," p. 3, by Bob Hull.

"There are Good Angels and Bad Angels, and if you wander around the heavens long enough, you're bound to bump into one or another from time to time. The 'Star Trek' crew ran into a strictly no-goodnick spirit in their latest space adventure, a tale illustrating the series' increasingly irritating insistence upon themes mystical rather than scientific. This one could have been saved for Halloween.

"Capt. Kirk (William Shatner), Mr. Spock (Leonard Nimoy) and Doc McCoy (DeForrest Kelley), had to do battle with five tykes who were under the malevolent influence of a green-edged, nearly transparent Friendly Angel named Gorgan, played with court-room pomposity by real-life attorney Melvin Belli. Gorgan infused the children with his evil powers to cause the suicides of their parents, members of an exploration team investigating a 'dead' planet. The Star Ship crewmen take them aboard their space-craft and, of course, fall under their spells. Fortunately, Capt. Kirk and Spock are made of strong stuff and manage to throw off the 'beats within' called up by the sorcerer, fist-shaking children, and save the day by turning Gorgan's evil into their ally. "The children, led by gangly Craig Hundley, demonstrated the power of good coaching. One of the five comely tykes was Belli's

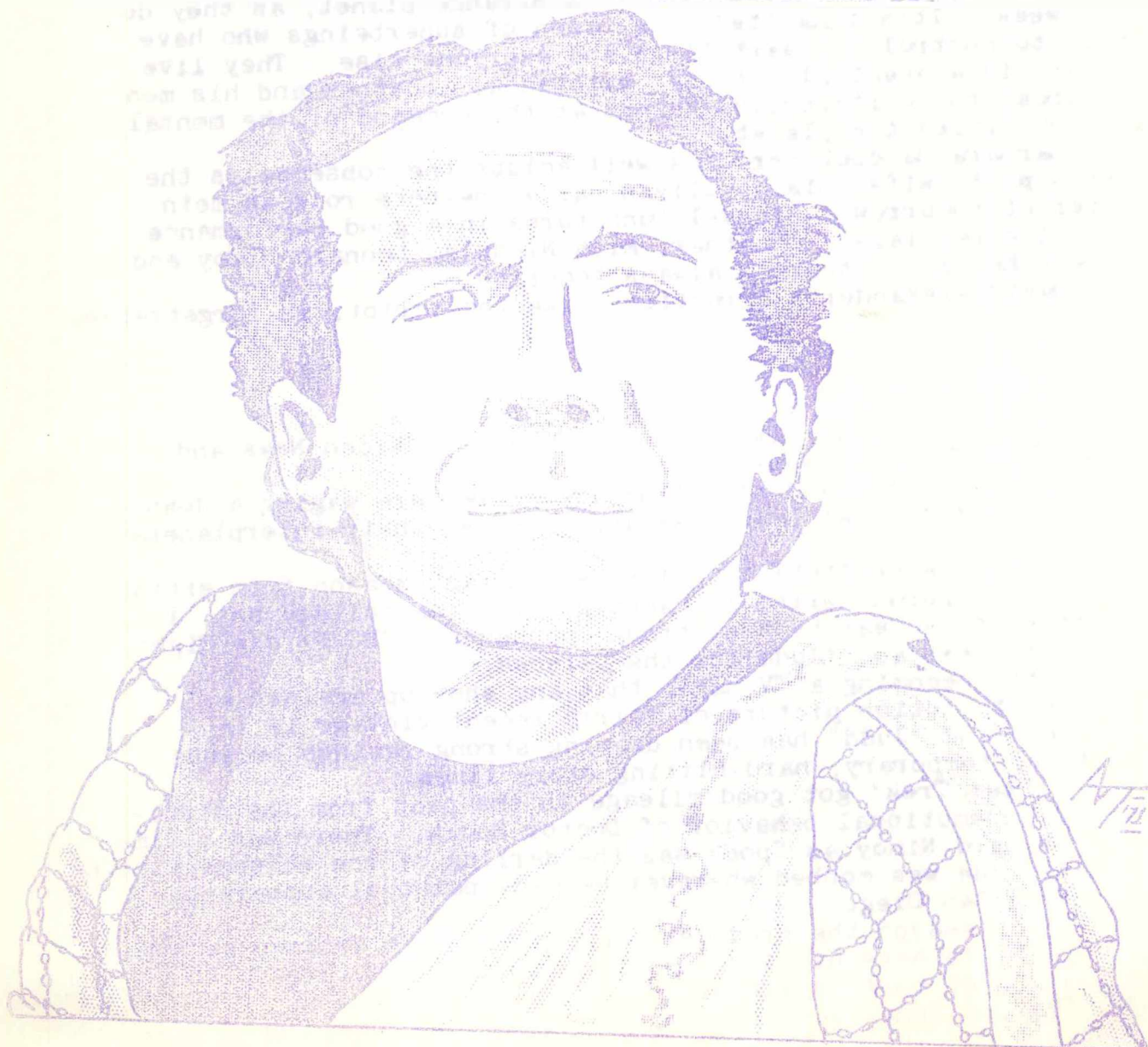
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own son, Caesar. Other regular crew members, including James Doohan (Scotty), Walter Koenig (Chekov), George Takei (Sulu) and Nichelle Nichols (Uhura) had little to do beyond an occasional scream or registers bug-eyed fear.

"Fred Friiburger produced with Marvin Chomley directing the script by Edward J. Lakso."

Daily Variety, Nov. 25, 1968, "TV Reviews," p. 14, by Daku.

"They almost blew the south, not to mention certain other sectors, on 'Star Trek.' Late in the running of a rather bad show, William Shatner kisses Nichelle Nichols. Kisses aren't new to tv, but bussing of a Negro doll by a white man is."



"However, before the bigots rush in to damn or the liberals to praise, it should be pointed out there was quite a cop-out in the Meyer Dolinsky script. As the starship commander, Shatner most reluctantly smooches Miss Nichols, a beautiful femme, and only because he is compelled to by the villain's evil powers. This neat little compromise acquits Shatner of crossing the line, because he has no control of his senses, the scripter is saying, in effect. Nor is Miss Nichols to be blamed, because she, too, is under the spell of the diabolical heavy. They both struggle valiantly against it in what is an intentionally hilarious scene. But they lose out to the script.

"Shatner and his crew land on a strange planet, as they do every week. It's inhabited by a breed of superbeings who have powers to control earthlings and everyone else. They live forever, in a seemingly Utopian existence. Shatner and his men are forced to do ridiculous things at the command of the mental giant who rules the planet.

"Barbara Babcock performs well amidst the nonsense as the ruler's purty wife, Liam Sullivan has a one-note role as mein Fuehrer of tomorrow. Michael Dunn turns in a good performance. As for the regulars -- Shatner, Miss Nichols, Leonard Nimoy and DeForest Kelley -- there's always tomorrow.

"David Alexander's direction, like the script, is forgettable."

Evening Tribune (San Diego), Jan. 10, 1969, "Video News and Views," by Joseph Thesken.

"Captain Kirk and his 'Star Trek' crew are waging a down-to-earth battle that's just as important as their interplanetary bouts.

"The science fiction series, saved last season from extinction by a vigorous write-in campaign from the college set, is embattled this year by two strong opponents, 'CBS Friday Night at the Movies' and 'Judd for the Defense.'

"It's becoming a TV maxim that any show up against a full-length motion picture of fairly recent vintage is in trouble. And 'Judd' has been drawing strong ratings because of its contemporary, hard-hitting story lines.

"'Star Trek' got good mileage in the past from the disciplined, unemotional behavior of Doctor Spock. There was a time when Leonard Nimoy as Spock was the darling of the science fiction addicts. He was mobbed wherever he made personal appearances, including San Diego.

"This season the producers apparently have decided to humanize Spock, to have him involved in romantic adventures with a collection of outer space beauties.

"Making Spock like the rest of mortal men has been a disappointment to many of the 'Star Trek' followers. He's no longer

on a pedestal of remoteness, no longer removed from the frailties of other men.

"And the scriptwriters have not helped brighten 'Star Trek's' future. Generally, the stories have been weak and ordinary.

"In past seasons, there were genuine attempts to bring in futuristic scientific plots with a degree of plausibility about them. They kept the viewers interested.

"Spock, with his pointed ears and logical mind, could always be relied upon to spark an otherwise-mediocre show. Now he's having a round of involvements that detract from his duties aboard the U.S.S. Enterprise.

"If the Enterprise is to survive another year in the outer limits of space the producers of 'Star Trek' may do well to return to the original formats that made the series appealing."

Life, March 21, 1969, "TV Review, a Dangerous Uneasiness with Ideas, The Great Twitch," p. 18, by John Leonard.

"The Great Twitch came over me a few Fridays ago, about 15 minutes into Star Trek.

"The Great Twitch is an involuntary protest....fingers curl, and the Great Twitch switches channels. While the denominator on another network may be just as common, at least it's different.

"I had been a fan of Star Trek. During its first two seasons, top science-fiction writers contributed scripts. There were tunnel-boring mineral mothers protecting their silicone eggs; and an unfortunate hole in the universe where matter and anti-matter crackled at each other; and an alien pubescent with godlike tantrums. Led by William Shatner as Captain Kirk and Leonard Nimoy as the Vulcanized Mr. Spock, a solid cast combined with competent special-effects technicians to make those scripts absorbing and provoking.

"Something awful happens, however, to a successful TV series. The industry tells us there just aren't enough stories to sustain a series forever. Granted; but conceptual sloppiness also plays a part. Early in a series the particulars of personality are established by the characters struggling with abstractions. That done, the abstractions are sent packing and the show starts to coast on personality. Personality without ideas means routines. Bits. Stale jokes and stylized dilemmas. An industry contemptuous of and uneasy with ideas turns on the charm machine -- a form of planned obsolescence rivaling Detroit's.

"There are enough ideas in the collected works of Bradbury, Sturgeon, Heinlein and Asimov to sustain Star Trek for a decade. Yet sometime during my two-year stupor the show became as predictable and depressing as the Paris peace talks. Each week we were expected to admire anew the wonder of Spock's pointed ears. Each week Dr. McCoy would lose his temper. Each week

Captain Kirk would suffer the temptations of heterosexuality, and each week, return wistfully to his great big sex-symbol, the starship Enterprise. A bad trip....

Punch, May 27, 1970, "Teleview" by Bernard Hollowood.

Star Trek (BBC1) is a science-fiction comic for children of all ages, an American import distinguished by its brilliant trick photography and studio effects. Visual SF is horribly handicapped by its inability to create acceptable forms of life on the remote planets other than amorphous balls of gas or blobs of electrical energy. So Star Trek is apt to strain credulity more than somewhat by having Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock of the space-ship Enterprise encounter recognisable earthman-types almost everywhere in the cosmos. Sometimes they are savages, sometimes devilishly brainy and advanced, and often they are green or blue, but always they resemble the inmates of a suburban nudist colony. Moreover, they usually speak English of a sort.

"They tend to suffer from the same political and social diseases as those that afflict us here below. Communism and Fascism, or brands thereof, are rampant. In one remote galaxy creatures of human form have discovered the secret of life everlasting, but have forgotten how to reproduce themselves. In another they are under the thumb of an underworld monster that lives on gargantuan helpings of fruit and manifests itself above ground in a papiermaché head of Hallowe'en horror.

"The crew of Enterprise are a dedicated, poker-faced lot who would, one suspects, find the Dr Who brigade insufferably frivolous. There is none of the merry patter indulged in by the Apollo missions, and only the womenfolk are allowed to register fear or to burst into tears.

"I give the series good marks for its clean, clinical production, its surrealist design and its heavy charge of dream-like escapism."

T-Waves Letters

from Jacqueline Lichtenberg

Contradictions Dept." McCoy said, "Now I know why they were conquered!" when Spock remarked, "My father's race was spared the dubious benefits of alcohol," in "Conscience of the King." Spock said, "Vulcan has never been conquered in living memory," in "Immunity Syndrome."

((Possibly the answer is in different definitions of the word "conquered," with the first referring to a military conquest in which a Terran force defeated a Vulcan force -- in an encounter in space? -- and the second referring to actual take-over of the land and government.))

The response to the Questionnaire has indicated a strong interest in the Strekzine List, and it has become impossible to answer each query personally. I would appreciate it if you could find space for this quickie announcement:

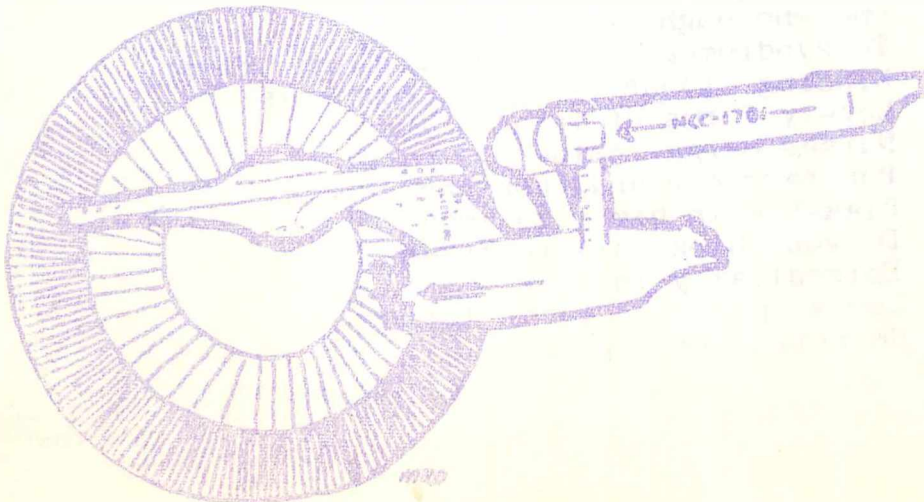
The deadline for returning the Roster Questionnaire is THANKSGIVING 1971. Don't put it off until you get left off. The Strekzine List of 59 ST zines (with circulation statistics on 33) is now available from Michael Sobota, 3321 Commercial Avenue, South Chicago Heights Illinois 60411. Price is \$1.50 (\$1.25 for costs plus 25¢ donated to UNICEF).

from L.E. Wallace, Jr., director Denham Springs Community Theater

On March 10, 11, & 12, the Denham Springs Community Theater presented "Star Date 3113.7," a two-act Star-Trek-like drama by L.E. Wallace, Jr. Charles Gibson directed. The play was a combination of stage production and motion picture. The motion picture sequences were shown through the use of a viewing screen constructed on stage (similar to the scanning device on "Star Trek"). All of the films were shot by members of the community theater, and no professional help was used.

The set of the play was the bridge of the Star Ship Esquire, which was similar to the bridge of the Star Ship Enterprise. The characters in the play were similar to those on the show, but with different names (Captain Kristopher James, played by L.E. Wallace, First Officer Mr. Chms, Dr. Mason Powell, etc.).

Gene Roddenberry gave his approval to the project (his letter said, in part, "I have no objection to plays similar to STAR TREK



or even identical to STAR TREK if done by students or community groups on a non profit basis as long as appropriate credit is given to the source material and individuals. Or as long as a production remains a community theatre venture, I have no objection to it involving some profit as long as that profit is used in the interest of that community theatre program. Good luck in your production").

The play was presented in the Catholic Community Center in Denham Springs, which has a seating capacity of 150 people. Somehow we managed to get nearly 700 people in to see the show on a standing room only basis all three performances.

Tape recordings of the play are available for \$6.95. (Send a money order to the Denham Springs Community Theater, PO Box 52996, Baton Rouge Louisiana 70805; state whether the tape recording is to be stereo or monaural.)

Huckster Note: Deck Six, a monthly (give or take a couple weeks) bulletin of news and notes about "Star Trek" and its former cast and crew, is available from Carol Pruitt, 62 Dwight Street, Brookline Massachusetts 02146, 3 issues/50¢.

perVerse

Mirror, Mirror on the wall,
Who's the sinfullest Spock of all?
Spores in Paradise attune
One who ought to be immune
To syndromes till he laughs and cries.
Minding clouds brings to his eyes
Lovely forms of female kind.
Nurses merge inside his mind.
Pon-farr now and then has struck.
Plak-tow in him runs amok.
Do you think this incorrect?
Episodically inspect
Spock upon your local station:
He still lives in sin -

- dication.

-- Cecily Horton & Ruth Berman

