

Star Trek: Strange New Worlds Episode Guide

Episodes 001-020

Last episode aired Thursday August 10, 2023





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Contents

Season 1	1
1 Strange New Worlds	3
2 Children of the Comet	11
3 Ghosts of Illyria	19
4 Memento Mori	25
5 Spock Amok	33
6 Lift Us Where Suffering Cannot Reach	41
7 The Serene Squall	49
8 The Elysian Kingdom	57
9 All Those Who Wander	65
10 A Quality of Mercy	73
Season 2	83
1 The Broken Circle	85
2 Ad Astra Per Aspera	91
3 Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow	97
4 Among the Lotus Eaters	103
5 Charades	111
6 Lost in Translation	119
7 Those Old Scientists	127
8 Under the Cloak of War	135
9 Subspace Rhapsody	141
10 Hegemony (1)	147
Actor Appearances	153

Season One

Strange New Worlds

Season 1
Episode Number: 1
Season Episode: 1

Originally aired: Thursday May 5, 2022
Teleplay: Akiva Goldsman
Story: Akiva Goldsman, Alex Kurtzman, Jenny Lumet
Director: Akiva Goldsman
Show Stars: Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokin (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Peter Bou-Ghannam (Palion Leader), Joseph Daly (Eldreth Aide #1), Rong Fu (Lt. Jenna Mitchell), André Dae Kim (Chief Kyle), Joel Lacoursiere (Kiley Guard), Gia Sandhu (T'Pring), Melanie Scrofano (Captain Batel), Shannon Widdis (Bridge Crew), Carla Bennett (Palion Aide #2), Jon Blair (Kiley Guard #2), Marianne Castro (Shuttle pilot), Bessie Cheng (Eldreth Aide #2), John Chou (Kiley Scientist #1), Myles Dobson (Vulcan Waiter), Chandra Galasso (Lieutenant), Jaimee Joe Gonzaga (Terminal Jockey #2), Sandy Kerr (Starfleet Scientist #1), David Kirby (Palion Aide #1), Dana Levenson (Newscaster), Andrew Locke (Terminal Jockey #1), Etan Muskat (Starfleet Scientist #2), Daniel Pagett (Kiley Scientist #2), Rachel Sellan (Woman in Elevator)
Summary: When one of Pike's officers goes missing while on a secret mission for Starfleet, Pike has to come out of self-imposed exile. He must navigate how to rescue his officer, while struggling with what to do with the vision of the future he's been given.



"No matter how many stars there are in the sky, no matter how many galaxies swirl beyond our own, no matter what the mathematical probabilities or the number of times we say 'we are not alone in the universe', our first visit from the stars is always the province of children's stories and science fiction. First contact with aliens always lives squarely in the impossible. First contact is just a dream... until one day, it isn't."

Inside some form of control center or bunker, alarms begin to ring, as an officer walks down the corridors to the control room. She and the people within are

revealed to be a humanoid species, making first contact with an unidentified object not of their world. As they get a stable image, they find themselves looking upon a Federation starship.

In Bear Creek, Montana, Captain Batel awakens to find the other half of the bed empty. Heading downstairs, she finds Captain Christopher Pike busy in the kitchen, making pancakes while watching the old film *The Day the Earth Stood Still* — again, as Batel notes. As they sit down to breakfast, greeting each other by their formal rank, Batel notices the look on Pike's face and asks if he has not decided yet. Pike responds that the USS Enterprise is in spacedock

for another week, which is "ages" to some. Suddenly, Pike's communicator goes off, and he is pointedly trying to ignore it; when it stops, he asks when she is shipping out. Batel asks him to talk about whatever it was he was keeping to himself, whatever has him questioning a return to his command. Pike replies it was classified, but Batel points out she has a higher security clearance than he does. "Not for this," is his only answer. She is departing at 0600 the following morning, and would not return for a month. Pike tells her he might still be there when she returns, and asks her to call him when she returns, so they could get together. Batel kisses him, saying that would be nice, but hopes he is not there when she returns, thinking he had better places to be. After Batel leaves, the communicator goes off again.

Pike takes his horse out for a ride in the snow, but the horse is frightened by the low descent of a Starfleet shuttlecraft. The officer that descends from the ramp is Admiral Robert April, the first captain of the Enterprise. Pike scolds him for spooking his horse, and April apologizes, saying that Pike had not been answering his communicator. Pike bluntly demands to know what he wants. April says he has a first contact scenario that may have gone bad, and the officer in command was someone he trusted, but he had lost contact with her ship. Pike is dismissive, saying it was not his problem, and that they had agreed they had until Enterprise left spacedock before making any decisions. The admiral reveals the reason he is approaching Pike: the officer in command is Pike's first officer, Una Chin-Riley, who reports that a new world might be considering Federation membership. She had not taken "downtime" all that well, reminding the admiral of Pike when he had been April's first officer. April is pulling Enterprise out of spacedock, electing to skip the redundant system checks, and needs the ship crewed and ready to go by 1800 hours. Pike tells him that Starfleet doesn't want him in command, but April sees that it was Pike himself who didn't want to be in command; as Batel did, he asks what happened, and as with Batel, Pike answers only that it was classified. April is sympathetic to what Pike is dealing with, but right now, he needs him on the Enterprise to find Una, and makes it an order.

In the city of Raal on Vulcan, Spock is seated in a restaurant with his betrothed T'Pring, discussing the formality of Vulcan conversation, often beginning with a query and expecting a response. She has asked him there on the anniversary of their first courtship event, and he notes she is wearing the ritual mating colors, and yet she has not asked him a single question throughout their entire meal. T'Pring replies that this was untrue, that she had indeed asked questions — about his family, about P'Sal's new lute recordings, and his "galavanting" around the galaxy with Starfleet. She then asks if there was a question he wanted her to ask. Spock is apologetic, as he has been away for a long time, which could mitigate matters of tradition. She finally asks the question he has been expecting: for him to formally marry her. Rather than the typical Vulcan response, he kisses her, causing one of the wait staff to request they do so elsewhere. "What an excellent idea," T'Pring agrees.

Having settled somewhere more private, Spock looks out at Vulcan's ocean, remarking on how there were oceans of liquid mercury on Salon, while Earth's were water. T'Pring thinks that nothing out there could be better than what was on Vulcan, and Spock asks her to show him. As she is about to oblige him, his communicator goes off; it is Pike, calling from Earth. Seeing Spock without a shirt, he wonders if he was naked; T'Pring says they were about to be, as it was a special night. Pike is apologetic, before explaining that April is sending them out to find Una. Spock tells his captain that he will meet him onboard, and that T'Pring will understand. As they close the channel, T'Pring points out that her "understanding" would have been worthy of a query, and tells him not to make a habit of assumptions; she does not intend to chase him across the galaxy just to get married. Spock assures her she will not have to chase him across the galaxy to get what they already had.

The shuttlecraft Stamets takes Pike up to the Enterprise, as he reviews a PADD regarding Lieutenant La'an Noonien-Singh and her involvement with first contact with the Gorn. The shuttle brings itself into transporter range, the pilot remarking on how she was "scrubbed up and good as new". Pike quietly wishes it were that easy, and tells the pilot to beam him aboard. He is met in the transporter room by Spock, who reports all systems were nominal, even though they had not been able to run simulation studies. Personnel rotation was in process, which meant some officers would have to billet after the mission, including the chief engineer and a Lieutenant Kirk, whom Pike had requested some time before. Pike remarks on how it felt like a million years, to which Spock promptly adds it had been three months, ten days, four hours, and five minutes. Pike asks how Spock himself was doing, and he replies that he was doing

well, although he felt the weight of loss for his adoptive sister Michael Burnham each time he returned to space; Pike expresses a similar feeling as they enter the turbolift. He reviews the new personnel roster, including a number of cadets and much needed additions to the medical staff, before coming across the entry for security; the new security chief has also been named acting first officer, much to Pike's surprise, as he had expected Spock, as second officer, to be given that job with Una missing. Spock replies that Starfleet Command preferred him to remain as science officer for the mission.

Pike and Spock arrive on the bridge, where they are greeted by La'an, the new chief of security and acting first officer. Pike welcomes her and all the newcomers aboard, and the old crew back. He asks helmsman Lieutenant Erica Ortegas if they were ready to depart, and Ortegas replies the course is set for Kiley 279. Lieutenant Jenna Mitchell at operations reports lights are green across the board, and the cadet at communications, Nyota Uhura, receives confirmation that Enterprise is cleared for launch. Pike orders Ortegas to take the ship out of spacedock. Mitchell reports they were prepared for warp speed. As he looks down at his chair controls, he sees a reflection of what he knows is his future, deformed and crippled by radiation poisoning, and momentarily freezes. Spock recalls his attention back to the present, and he gives Ortegas the order: "Hit it."

As the ship goes to warp, Pike asks Uhura for a shipwide channel. He begins by jokingly hoping that no one was caught with their hair wet or their pants down because of the early departure, before telling them that Starfleet typically sent out first contact teams when they detect a working warp engine, and one such had been sent to Kiley 279 aboard the USS Archer. The Archer has dropped out of contact, and their mission was to find them — and if they were lucky, make some new friends. "Nobody dies," he says, a somber note in his voice. "This will not be anybody's last day." With that, he turns the conn over to La'an and goes to his quarters. Spock looks worriedly after him, before turning back to his console.

Alone in his quarters, Pike recalls his vision of the future, before being brought back to the present by the chiming of his door. It is Spock, who assures Pike he does not mean to overstep. Pike invites him to overstep, before pouring himself a glass of Saurian brandy. Spock gets to the point, asking if Pike was himself. Pike replies he was very much himself, which was the problem. Spock is aware that Pike had been changed when he had gone down to Boreth during their time aboard the USS Discovery, and he knew that Boreth was known for two things: a monastery, and a rare ore that caused temporal consciousness displacement, both of which had the power of transformation. Pike replies it was not the monastery, and Spock had assumed as much, asking if Pike saw the future. Pike confirms he had witnessed what he felt was the death of the man he was now. He knew exactly how and when his life would end, and not only saw it, but felt it as well. He notes how most Humans liked to think they could cheat death until the very last moment, and he had thought so once as well. Spock asks if it was soon, but Pike replies it was not, that it was almost a decade away, which suddenly felt soon to him. Spock thinks that knowledge of death was vital to effective leadership, but Pike not only knew it, he experienced it. He worries what that knowledge will do to him, and had started to second-guess himself, the last thing a captain could afford. Spock believes suffering could be built on insight, and that Pike could make some good come of this knowledge of his own fate, to be the man he essentially is: the captain. Just then, Uhura calls from the bridge, as they were dropping out of warp. Spock rises to report back, as Pike looks at his reflection in the bottle, reliving the moment he witnessed himself confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life, before he rises to follow.

The Enterprise comes out of warp over Kiley 279; the Archer's transponder ping is detected on the planet's night side. Pike orders Uhura to hail them, but she does not receive a response. Pike asks if they could be losing the response in subspace chatter, but Uhura reports there is no subspace chatter at all; the space was "dead quiet". Ortegas has brought the ship to the Archer's position and brings it up on visual; Mitchell reports the ship is completely intact, all systems apparently functional. Spock is unable to detect any lifesigns, but there were no signs of bodies, either. brings up the ship's manifest, which consisted solely of Una and two astrophysicists, Lieutenant Key and Ensign Hadad. La'an thinks if she went to the surface, she would have gone for the detected warp signature. However, Spock is unable to pinpoint it, and Ortegas detects a "pretty weird" signal variance. La'an, digesting the information, recommends raising the deflector shields. Spock reminds her taking a defensive posture would violate first contact protocol, but La'an points out that there were no hails from the surface or subspace chatter, and no signs

of any orbital docking facilities or interplanetary traffic, any sign of space colonization at all, which Spock knows would put them a century behind the development of warp travel... and yet there was a warp signature. Pike is convinced, and orders the shields raised. It proves to be perfect timing, as several plasma torpedoes are fired from the surface, with minimal damage to the shields. Pike orders Ortegas to take them into a higher orbit, to deceive whoever fired the torpedoes that they had destroyed the Enterprise... then wonders how a culture that used technology that was two centuries old by Federation standards had built a warp drive. Looking at his readings again, Spock realizes they haven't, and recommends red alert. The inhabitants have not built a warp drive, but rather a bomb.

Spock reviews the data with Pike and La'an, explaining that there were two factions at war with one another on Kiley 279, and their conflict had reached a crisis point; surface scans indicated a pre-warp civilization. When La'an asks how that was possible, Spock replies that the Vulcans invented first contact ("As they never fail to remind us," Pike jokes), and brings up the systems in the sector that had warp capability, including Xahea, Chin'toka, and the Talarian Republic, among others; all were in the process of negotiating admission to the Federation, and they were free to travel to any of them, and thus General Order One did not apply. However, not on any of those worlds, or even in the history of first contact, had warp capability been developed first for anything other than propulsion, comparing it to discovering nuclear weapons before particle physics: it was possible, but had never been done. Pike asks if Una would have known the signature was a weapon, and Spock believes she wouldn't have; the Enterprise's scanners had been upgraded in spacedock. La'an thinks that if the plasma weapons were the best the inhabitants had, they should beam down, find their people, and bring them home. Pike points out that there was the possibility the technology was not native to them; no matter how they got it, however, General Order One would apply, and they would not be able to interfere. La'an asks if that meant they were just going to leave their people down there. "Hardly," Pike replies, before saying they should go down to see the doctor.

In sickbay, Pike is happily greeted by Dr. M'Benga; they had toured their mutual home regions of Earth together. He introduces the doctor to Spock, and as he does likewise for La'an, M'Benga notes how good it was to see her again, as he had had to certify her for duty. He introduces them to his nurse, Christine Chapel, who was part of a civilian exchange program from the Stanford Morehouse Epigenetic Project. Pike thinks her the right person for the job; when La'an asks about said job, Chapel cheerfully replies that she was going to "mess with [their] genome". The locals were humanoid, closely matching the crew's physiology, but some alterations were required to blend in, although the Kiley inhabitants had some organs that would take longer to replicate, and so suggests not getting any X-rays. M'Benga explains that Chapel is part of a Starfleet initiative to observe alien cultures without contamination. La'an asks if the procedure was safe, and Chapel answers that it was, "almost" every time. She applies a sedative first, as the process involved "compressed, jury-rigged metamorphosis", which involved considerable pain. For Spock, his unique Vulcan-Human genetics might mean the process would not last as long the first time. La'an elects to undergo the procedure without the sedative. Pike has read her file, and she asks if he is ordering her to undergo the sedation. He makes clear he's not, and respects her choice.

As the three fully-altered officers enter the transporter room, Chief Kyle reports that local clothing, along with universal translators and tricorders, would be in the buffer along with them, and asks if there would be no weapons. Pike confirms, and Kyle sets the coordinates in an area with no foot traffic. Pike jokingly asks Kyle not to lose his socks, and gives the order to energize.

Pike, Spock, and La'an materialize in an alley, dressed for their environment; Spock is somewhat put out that he is wearing shorts rather than long pants. They see a news report from a screen in a nearby square, reporting on anti-government protests amid rumors of an advanced weapon being developed by the government for domestic use. Pike and Spock recognize it as being similar to events in the United States of America, particularly involving their two civil wars and their devastating results. Pike is concerned that the Kiley society is already at a flashpoint with an advanced weapon, while La'an uses her tricorder to get a closer fix on the warp signature's location — a building ahead of them, with protestors outside. As they get outside the building, Spock's scans show the shielding makes transporting inside impossible. Just then, two Kiley scientists emerge from inside, and La'an asks for permission to "act fast". After Pike grants it, she feigns some kind of illness, asking for their help to get her medication. She then calls out

"his neck"; after a moment, Spock finally realizes what she's asking for, and incapacitates both with a Vulcan neck pinch. They could replicate their clothing and security badges to match their retinal scans; as for the two scientists, La'an suggests beaming them onto the ship and keeping them sedated in sickbay.

The two Kileys are placed under low-level sedation while M'Benga runs scans. Chapel asks for a DNA sample; Spock's genetic encoding is beginning to deteriorate, and if he doesn't get a booster with actual Kiley DNA, he won't pass a retinal scan. For it to work, the Kileys would need to have compatible protein patterns to match Spock's Vulcan blood. The first man is incompatible, but the second is a match. Suddenly, the first man awakens, wondering where he is; M'Benga sedates him, while the second manages to scurry away and flee down the corridor. Both M'Benga and Chapel recall a similar incident on Delta Scorpii VII; the doctor tells her to "chase the rabbit" while he prepares the booster. Chapel jokes about always getting the fun jobs, as she pursues the Kiley through the corridors. "Well, you're my favorite," M'Benga says. He warns Ortigas, holding the conn, to have the landing party stand by and not enter the building, while Chapel adds they had a "Delta Scorpii VII situation" on their hands. Ortigas grouches about how it always happened when she had the captain's chair.

Pike commends La'an on the "performance" she gave, and La'an replies that she had assumed the "prey posture", useful for tricking predators into thinking one was helpless. Ortigas calls Pike from the ship, saying he couldn't go inside, as Spock needed a booster to get past the retinal scanners. As they were being ushered through by government officials, the landing party couldn't stop. M'Benga asks Kyle if he can pinpoint a location to beam down and apply an eye salve. Kyle protests that transporters couldn't do that, but Ortigas steps in and orders him to make them do that. Meanwhile, Chapel pursues the fleeing Kiley, who is clearly frightened and wondering about his surroundings, before he finds himself inside a turbolift — standing next to Uhura. Uhura reassures him that they were going to the bridge where the "Backtack" was, referring to how the Backtack controlled everything in the Kileys' game of tagball. Chapel runs back to sickbay, accidentally knocking over some members of the crew, and has M'Benga use the emergency medical transporter to beam her to the bridge. As Uhura is discussing a tagball game that the scientist had actually been present for, Chapel comes from behind with the sedative. Ortigas sarcastically welcomes the unconscious Kiley to the Enterprise, as Uhura and Chapel introduce themselves to one another.

At the same time, Pike goes through the checkpoint first, applying his security card and retinal scanner, followed by La'an. As Spock does likewise, the scanner doesn't read him at first, but Kyle is eventually able to apply the salve with the transporter, allowing him to go through. Spock is concerned that the alterations will continue to wear off. La'an is picking up Una's lifesigns, explaining that there were high levels of radiation shielding in the walls, which is why their sensors could not penetrate; only something like a warp signature could even get through. Now that they were inside, she could pick up her lifesigns, indicating she was still alive, several levels below them. As they stand in the elevator, one of the Kileys notices Spock's ears begin to almost shimmer, before the landing party reaches the level they want. As they are finally alone, Spock admits the effect is painful, but the recoding seems to be holding. They approach three locked doors, detecting Una's lifesigns through one of them.

Opening the door, Pike finds his first officer and her crew, looking worse for wear but otherwise unharmed; her foot is encased in a cast, and Hadad has his arm in a sling from a projectile wound during a firefight. She is surprised to see La'an, and Pike is equally surprised to see that they know one another. La'an admits that Una had helped her out of a "bad spot" once, and apologizes for not saying anything earlier. Pike tells her they can discuss it later. Una tells Spock the shielding is jointed, and wonders if they could get a transport signal through the gaps. Spock confirms they could, if they were closer to the surface. The landing party escorts their comrades out, but as more Kileys emerge from the elevator, Spock feels the pain growing unbearable, finally grabbing his head and screaming in pain before his normal Vulcan features assert themselves. Seeing their cover is blown, they are forced to knock out the Kileys and leave them lying in the hall before escaping to the elevator.

Inside, Pike asks what happened, as the Kileys were clearly not ready for first contact. Una glances at La'an for a moment, saying she was not cleared, but Pike dismisses that, asking how they got warp capability. Una replies that they had given it to them, during that final battle near Xahea, when Burnham opened the wormhole that sent her and the Discovery through to

the future. They were less than one light-year out from the zero point of the wormhole, and between the Klingon ships and the Ba'ul fighters flown by the Kelpiens, there were more than a hundred warp signatures. Pike realizes the Kileys' telescopes would have been just powerful enough to detect all of it, and collected enough data to reverse-engineer a matter-antimatter reactor. The Kileys were not ready for warp drive, and now they were using the technology to build a weapon. Pike blames himself for not considering it, but Una assures him no one could have considered it; they were fighting for the very lives that were in jeopardy now. Spock reports he had contact with the Enterprise, and transporters were able to lock onto them. Una reminds Pike that they couldn't make the Kileys care about the stars, only to crush their enemies... and they had given the Kileys the means to do that. An alarm sounds, meaning the unconscious Kileys had been found. Pike again sees his future reflection from the nearby control panel, as Spock awaits his order to return to the ship. But Pike is convinced every death from thereon out would be on their hands. Spock reminds him they could not interfere with the destiny of this world, but Pike points out they already had. He orders that the others return to the ship, while he and Spock remained behind. Una protests, reminding him about General Order One. "Screw General Order One," Pike replies bluntly. La'an reluctantly pulls her communicator and orders four to beam up, with Pike and Spock remaining behind.

As the others beam out, Spock asks if this was wise, as he was clearly alien; Pike replies that he was counting on that. As the elevator halts, they find themselves held at gunpoint. "Take me to your leader," Pike says.

Pike and Spock are taken before the head of the planetary government, where Pike apologizes to her entire world for the effect they had upon it. She asks if that meant their ingenuity was the result of his mistake, but Pike answers that he meant the Federation should have been more circumspect about showing off their technologies, as one of its core tenets was to avoid unduly influencing less advanced civilizations. The technology they were using could bridge the gap between worlds, but its destructive capacity could not be underestimated. The leader says the government has been in conflict with a "seditious faction" for centuries and now had the means to end that conflict. Spock asks if that meant mass murder, to which she asks if his people had never put down civil unrest before. Pike believes negotiation and debate led to lasting peace. The leader asks if there were groups who refused to negotiate, powerful ones, and Pike confirms there were. When asked how that was handled, he quotes a proverb from the Kikuyu people of Kenya, that "when elephants fight, it's the grass that suffers". The leader points out that proverbs were less useful than a "big stick", and whoever had the "biggest stick" wins. When Pike tries to explain about what regulations compel him to do, she interrupts by saying his rules were not her rules, and that her job was to ensure her people's ability to govern future generations, and if spilled blood was the price, then so be it. She orders the guards to take them away. Pike wonders aloud what good was a rule if you weren't willing to die for it... or break it. He calls out an emergency communication to the Enterprise, ordering the ship into a lower orbit with full visibility. Outside, air raid sirens begin to sound as the Enterprise is clearly visible in the sky. "Just like you said, whoever has the biggest stick wins," Pike says to the Kiley leader. "In this case, that is me."

A newscaster reports that the leaders of the government and revolutionary factions will meet for the first time in a century to discuss the arrival of the aliens, as the Enterprise hovers visibly in the distance. Back onboard, Pike watches the debate with La'an and Spock, the former sarcastically saying it was going well, the latter saying the two sides were used to centuries of violence, and that the true cost of civil war was abstract. "Not believing you're gonna die is what gets you killed," La'an says disgustedly. Pike looks up at her and asks her to repeat that statement. La'an apologizes, recalling something her father had said before his death. As Pike would have read in her file, her colony ship, the SS Puget Sound, was attacked by the Gorn, the crew brought to one of their planetary nurseries. She had not understood her father's meaning at first, but had a lot of time to think about why she was the only member of the Puget Sound's crew to survive. She asks Pike if he knew what she saw on the faces of her loved ones while they were slit open and fed alive to the young, or used as breeding sacks, and Pike has a good idea: surprise, not believing until the very end that they could die. But La'an was different, and that was why she survived. Coming to a decision, Pike asks for access to the historical database, and orders Uhura to prepare a package to transmit to the surface.

Pike beams himself down into the middle of the debate hall and introduces himself, explaining that their peoples, despite being from different worlds, were very much alike. He shows them

images of what Earth looked like today, with views of San Francisco and of the orbital spacedocks that held ships like the Enterprise; outside, the protestors are seeing the footage live on the screens. He then shows footage of Earth in the 21st century, before "everything went wrong". He explains he got a glimpse of his own future, and it was not one he expected, and that a good friend asked him what good it was to know your future, but he didn't understand what he meant until now. He now shows what awaits the Kileys in their future, as he shows them images of the conflicts on Earth; he explains it began as a fight over freedom at first, too, which they called the Second Civil War, then the Eugenics Wars, then finally just World War III. It resulted in the destruction of more than six hundred thousand different species of plants and animals, and the deaths of more than thirty percent of Earth's population. The technology the Kileys had obtained gave them the means to exterminate themselves, and from the looks of them, Pike is convinced they will do so. They will use their competing ideas of liberty until their world is blown to rubble, just as Earth had been in the past. Perhaps some are convinced that their futures are written, just as Pike knows his is, but he chooses to believe their destinies are still their own. Perhaps that was why he was there, he muses — to remind them of the power of possibility, that even if their end is already written, as his is, they could still live what life they had gloriously, because until their last moment, the future was what they made of it. He offers them a choice: they can continue to fight one another, or they can join the Federation and reach for the stars. The revelation of the Enterprise has a lasting effect among the people, being taught about in classrooms and scientific research centers.

The Enterprise returns to Starbase 1, where Admiral April explains that he had just enough pull to convince the Federation High Court not to throw the entire crew in jail for violating General Order One, and had had to call in a few favors to be read in about what had happened to Discovery. Spock asks how he was able to keep them from being charged, and April replied he used a loophole: since there could be no acknowledgment of a battle even taking place, then nor could there be of how the people of Kiley 279 acquired warp capability. The Federation Council was not pleased, and was doubling down on enforcement of General Order One, calling it the "Prime Directive", something Pike doesn't think will stick. Una asks for permission to return to the Enterprise, and April replies that was up to Pike, asking if he was planning on keeping the captain's chair.

After the meeting adjourns, La'an meets with Pike in private, and admits she should have told him earlier. Pike asks her to tell him now. She explains the Gorn had a ritual, that the last survivor was sent into space on a raft, like throwing back a fish. One was not actually expected to survive that, and La'an calls it "dumb luck" that she was discovered by the USS Martin Luther King Jr.; Una had been an ensign on the King at that time and helped La'an find her way home, and was the reason La'an joined Starfleet. She was concerned that her past association would have meant that Pike wouldn't have trusted her on the mission, to which Pike wonders if that meant she decided not to trust him instead. He concedes her record is spotless, but there was more to Starfleet than individual excellence, emphasizing the need to work together. La'an admits other people are challenging for her. Pike points out to the biodomes outside, explaining that during World War III, scientists sent seed pods into space to preserve them, but after the war ended and Earth had rebuilt, the forests had grown too large to bring back, so Starfleet built its first base around them. It was proof that even in space, growth was possible. With that in mind, Pike formally offers her a place on the Enterprise.

In his captain's log, Pike thinks on how Earth was his hearth, but Enterprise was his home, and considers himself a "lucky man". He arrives on the bridge, where Una reports that the crew rotation is complete, and Lieutenant Kirk is on his way up. As he enters, it is revealed that the Kirk in question is George Samuel Kirk, a friend of Pike's, who has been posted to life sciences and would report to Spock. La'an was on station as the official chief of security. In the transporter room, Lieutenant Hemmer, the new chief engineer, beams aboard. Uhura obtains clearance for departure and warp speed, and Spock reports all systems were ready. Ortega asks what their course would be, what mission awaited them. Pike says only that their mission was to explore, to seek out new life and new civilizations, and to boldly go where no one had gone before, something Uhura considers "cool". Pike smiles at her as he orders Ortega to take them out, warp factor two.

Children of the Comet

Season 1

Episode Number: 2

Season Episode: 2

Originally aired: Thursday May 12, 2022
Writer: Henry Alonso Myers, Sarah Tarkoff
Director: Maja Vrvilo
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokun (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Dan Jeannotte (Lieutenant George Samuel "Sam" Kirk), Dana Beddoe (Alien Daughter (Deleb)), Amber V. Cull (Alien Mother (Deleb)), Jennifer Hui (Ensign Christina), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer), André Dae Kim (Chief Kyle), Thom Marriott (Shepherd Captain)
Summary: An ancient alien relic thwarts the Enterprise crew from re-routing a comet on track to strike an inhabited planet.



"Cadet's log. Stardate 2912.4. The Enterprise is surveying the Persephone system, where the crew is studying the behavior of an ancient comet, C/2260-Quentin. I, however, am doing rotation in landing party readiness protocols, which doesn't really involve comets, ancient or otherwise, so duties are pretty slow at the moment. Except, of course, for a recent invitation to dinner at the captain's cabin, for which I have been encour-

aged by Lieutenant Ortegas to dust off my dress uniform."

The people of a desert village are going about their normal routine. Some have their eyes drawn upwards, where a comet crosses the sky.

The comet, C/2260-Quentin, is making its way through the Persephone system, and the USS Enterprise has been sent to survey it. Onboard, Uhura has been summoned to dine with Captain Pike in his cabin, and Lieutenant Ortegas told her to wear her dress uniform. As she steps off the turbolift, she encounters Ortegas, who is not in uniform at all, and Uhura realizes she is being hazed. Ortegas admits it, saying people got bored on a "small" ship. As Uhura turns to change, Ortegas warns she does not want to be late to the captain's table. The helm officer jokes that Uhura has her first square of "Enterprise bingo", reminding her that even she had been a cadet once and subject to all the "traditions" that came with it. Uhura asks about what awaits her, and Ortegas explains that Captain Pike prefers to have regular members of the crew, not just the command staff, so that he can keep informed about the goings-on aboard ship; he might ask her questions. Uhura is less than enthused, thinking on how her father mentioned she was "unburdened by conversational boundaries". "So this'll be fun for you, then," Ortegas notes, as they reach Pike's quarters.

Pike himself, also dressed informally and wearing an apron, greets them, chuckling at seeing Uhura in dress uniform, and invites them in; Una is among the first to greet them, while Pike attends to the ribs he was cooking. His cabin appears to resemble equal parts kitchen and dining room, with some preparing the food while others waited. Uhura goes around the room, until she comes across an Aenar cutting up vegetables, and offers to help him. His reply is a curt "no". Spock, standing nearby, says she has offended Commander Hemmer, the new chief engineer. Uhura apologizes, saying that she was drawn to help people with "sensory impairments". Hemmer notes that Humans in his condition might consider themselves "impaired"; Spock explains that his other senses compensate for his blindness, to which Hemmer amends that his other senses were superior. Uhura recalls reading that the Aenar have precognitive abilities. Hemmer had known she would ask about that, not because of precognition, but because everyone always did. He suddenly raises a hand and catches a carrot Spock tosses to him in mid-air, commenting on how he "telegraphed [his] throw telepathically", which was Spock's intention to illustrate Hemmer's enhanced senses. Uhura thinks this is another example of hazing, before saying to Hemmer in Andorian that he needed to get out more. "Seriously," she adds in Vulcan for Spock's benefit, before going back to Federation Standard and saying she needed a drink, as she goes to get one. "I like her," Hemmer comments, and Spock concurs.

At the captain's table, Pike regales his guests with an amusing story from when he was an ensign, tripping over the fallen pants of a Nausicaan he was pursuing, and how his commanding lieutenant thought that perhaps security was not the best fit for him. Spock admits he has never understood the Human inclination to laugh at other people's misfortune, calling it "impolite". Nurse Chapel replies that this is what made it funny; Pike adds that sometimes, things go so wrong, it makes one laugh. Uhura rises from the table to pour herself a drink, humming a tune to herself. When Pike asks about it, she explains it was a "bad habit", a folk song from her native Kenya. Pike recalls the "achingly beautiful" sight of Lake Simbi Nyaima, which he had visited several times; Uhura grew up not too far from there. Given how few cadets are taken in aboard the Enterprise, Pike thinks Uhura would have to have been quite impressive to make the cut, noting that she spoke twelve languages. She corrects him by saying she spoke thirty-seven, since Kenya alone had twenty-two languages; she felt the best way to be understood by people was to speak their language, so she learned them all, and found it easy to do so. Pike knows she's on the landing party rotation, and might find it difficult jumping from specialty to specialty, with a glance at Una ("it was one time," she says), but is sure Uhura has chosen one she likes. His voice catches as he asks her where she sees herself in ten years, again thinking of where he knows he will be. Uhura admits she isn't sure she considers herself "all that Starfleet", which surprises Pike, who notes how she worked her way there, beating out several thousand other applicants to get a posting on the Enterprise. Uhura replies that she wanted to study alien languages, and had originally intended to go to the University of Nairobi, as both her parents had taught there; a week before she was due to start, her parents were killed in a shuttle accident, along with her older brother. She couldn't go to the campus, feeling her family's absence, and felt she never fit in anywhere anymore. She had gone to live with her grandmother, who had been in Starfleet and talked often about it, and so ran away to the Academy. Pike is impressed by her honesty, and hopes she can find a place where she does fit, wherever that might be.

Walking in the corridors with Spock, Uhura wonders if she "blew it". Spock assures her that Pike values honesty, as does he. However, he adds that many, himself included, saw Starfleet as a lifelong dream, and if Uhura didn't feel she wanted to walk on that path, she should step aside for someone who did.

In his cabin, Una knows Pike had asked the same "where will you be" question to many cadets, but it felt different that time, wondering if it had to do with what he had told her about his experience on Boreth. Pike concedes that knowing one's future took the fun out of imagining it. Una asks if he had considered his fate wasn't written, but Pike recites a series of names, and Una realizes he knows the names of the cadets he will save in the accident that will cripple him, several years in the future. Pike has been repeating their names to himself over and over, as a reminder to "stay the course". Una refuses to believe there is no other way, just as the comm chimes, summoning Pike to the bridge — Spock has found a "problem" with the comet.

Spock shows a simulation indicating that the comet will impact the surface of the nearby planet, Persephone III, in two days, leaving no survivors. The planet is class M and inhabited by a pre-warp civilization called the Deleb. As the Deleb are not technologically advanced enough

to move it themselves, Spock proposes using four ion engines to divert the comet's path and account for its rotation. La'an suggests using photon torpedoes as launch vehicles, which would take about an hour to retrofit, which Hemmer calls a "rosy assessment" as he would be the one doing the work. Pike orders them to get it done, as they had a planet to save before breakfast. "I love this job," he adds sotto voce to Una. But as the torpedoes are deployed, they impact against a force field, leaving Pike wondering how a comet would put one up.

In the conference room, Una reports that they've tried hailing and scanning the comet, but find no lifesigns. However, there is an enormous, mostly subterranean structure, which indicates alien intelligence. Pike has asked Lieutenant Kirk, the ship's xenanthropologist, to join them, and asks the crew for their opinions: it looks like a comet, has shields like a starship, and a structure like a planet. La'an theorizes it could be a derelict spacecraft. Spock thinks the structure is the best place to investigate, noting that the shields only reacted to threats, meaning they could beam to the surface. Pike asks Kirk if he knew of any civilizations that sprang from comets, and Kirk admits this was the first he's heard of. Pike notes he likes the mustache, and Kirk suggests he try one himself. The captain then orders La'an, Spock, Kirk, and Uhura to suit up, noting that this would be Uhura's first landing party. "You wanted to speak alien languages," he tells her. "Go where the aliens are."

As they put on their environmental suits, Chapel explains to the landing party that the comet is bombarded by "ridiculous" amounts of cosmic rays, and that the hypo she would inject them with gave them two hours. Uhura finds the injection painful, and thinks Chapel could have warned her; the nurse replies cheerfully that if she had, Uhura would have known it would hurt. Kirk winces a little as he receives his, while La'an does not seem affected at all, remaining all business as she tells the crew to "weapon up". Chapel then comes to Spock, asking if he was ready; Spock replies that he was ready for any kind of pain she could inflict, leading Chapel to joke that he was toying with her. La'an then tosses Spock a phaser. Suited up, the landing party heads to the transporter room. La'an reminds them that gravity will be a fraction of Earth's normal. They all power on their suits, and Spock gives the order to Chief Kyle to energize.

Materializing on the surface, Spock and La'an make their way forward, but Uhura is hanging back, taking in her new surroundings. Kirk asks if she was "good", and she replies she was, taking in the idea of standing on the surface of a comet. The landing party makes its way inside the above-ground part of the structure, entering a chamber with what appears to be an egg in its center. Spock's scans show the chamber has a breathable atmosphere. La'an moves to secure the perimeter while Spock continues his scans to make sure the room is secure. Kirk and Uhura approach the egg in the middle, seeing the markings; he asks whether they were merely decoration or some kind of language. Uhura is overwhelmed, and Kirk understands that she was a cadet and on her first away mission, but reminds her she was there for a reason. She approaches the egg, seeing that the patterns on it repeated in a sequence. Kirk decides to approach it, and the egg begins to glow. However, Spock detects a dangerous energy buildup within it, and warns Kirk to step away from it. But it is too late: as he raises his hand to touch it, the energy discharges, knocking him across the room. La'an and Spock remove his helmet and scan his lifesigns, finding his heart has stopped. La'an tries to contact the ship for an emergency beamout, but the signal is spotty; likewise, Kyle is having difficulty getting a transporter lock. Spock uses the defibrillator function on his tricorder to try and restart Kirk's heart. Kyle manages to get a lock and tries to energize, but the comet's shields raise, blocking the signal. Spock is able to stabilize Kirk's condition, but their comms were being blocked. The landing party was now cut off from the ship.

La'an's tricorder shows Kirk has sustained severe trauma from electrical shock, and has put him under sedation, leading Uhura to suggest not touching anything else. Spock knows that Kirk will not survive without proper medical attention, and La'an's scans also show the force field is back up, leading Uhura to ask what kind of comet wanted to keep them there. Spock considers that a "salient question", one that Uhura may be the only one to answer. Uhura reminds him that it was her first away mission, but Spock replies that she was the only linguistics expert there, and her knowledge might be able to decode the markings on the egg.

In the Deleb village on the surface, one of the villagers approaches her young daughter, who worriedly points up at the comet as it glows brighter in the sky. She takes the child inside the nearby hut, her own expression that of concern as she steals a glance at the comet as well.

Aboard the Enterprise, Pike is also looking worried, but also determined. He polls the bridge

for ideas to save not only their own people, but the Deleb on the surface who would die without their help. Ortegas suggests phaser harmonics, setting their weapons to a higher frequency to counteract the shield. Una concurs, thinking the right frequency would shatter the shield. Pike approves the idea, and orders Ortegas to bring the ship around.

Inside the comet, Uhura is examining the markings, as Spock asks how she was doing. Uhura admits she was pretending not to be way over her head, before seeing Spock's expression and asking if that was too honest. Spock replies that Vulcans were often "too honest", which Uhura thinks his "girlfriend", Chapel, would appreciate. Spock replies that Chapel was not his girlfriend. Uhura knows this, but points out Chapel had been flirting with him. She is trying to add humor to diffuse tensions, thinking on what Pike had said at the dinner about things going so wrong, one had to laugh. Spock prefers "rigorous logic" to ease tensions, and Uhura concedes that would work too. As Spock moves away from her, Uhura turns to find La'an glaring at her, before returning to work.

Una reports that the phasers were locked and ready, and Pike tells her to give the command. Before she can, the ship is shaken by a weapons impact, as a large vessel positions itself between the Enterprise and the comet. Pike orders hailing frequencies, identifying himself and his ship, and asking why they had been fired upon. The other identifies his people as the "Shepherds", causing Pike to glance at Ensign Christina at communications with some disbelief. Christina says that was how the universal translator had rendered it. The Shepherd captain explains that he is escorting M'hanit, which he calls "far more than a comet", but one of the ancient arbiters of life. He then threatens to destroy the Enterprise if they attempt to tamper with it again.

Pike turns to Una and orders her to scan the ship, finding out what kind of weapons they were dealing with, before turning back to the Shepherd captain to explain that their intentions were not hostile. M'hanit was about to impact an inhabited planet, and they were trying to divert its trajectory. The Shepherd captain calls it "absurd", comparable to changing the height of a wave or the position of the stars; M'hanit's course was preordained. Pike protests that the impact will likely destroy M'hanit and also kill millions of people on the surface. The Shepherd suddenly asks if he was a reasonable man, and Pike replies he would like to think so. The Shepherd then asks him to entertain the proposition that M'hanit was not a comet, but an instrument, an arbiter. It would move if it willed it, and bring life if it so chose; if it chose to die, and take the planet along with it, then it would as well. The Shepherd reiterates that M'hanit's course was preordained. Pike is incensed by this, saying that destroying an inhabited planet was not preordained. The Shepherd counters that Pike had said he was a reasonable man, so how could he know? His people have been charged with protecting their "arbiters" for as long as they could remember. It was not their prerogative to interfere, nor was it Pike's.

Seeing Una has news for him, Pike pauses the communication, before expressing his opinion of the "Shepherds" to be more like zealots. Una reports the Shepherd vessel was faster and more advanced than the Enterprise, with Ortegas assessing their weapons capability by simply saying they "wouldn't want to piss them off". Pike asks how they could divert the comet without doing that. Una insists they buy time for the landing party to get the force field down, with Pike expressing the hope the Shepherds don't know they're down there. He orders Christina to resume communications, saying that while the Shepherd had their sacred duty, the Federation had theirs, and while he did not intend to disrespect M'hanit, they couldn't just let a planet die. The Shepherd captain retorts that while Pike was talking about respect and non-interference, they have indeed detected the landing party in the "temple" on the surface, calling their presence "blasphemy". "M'hanit will be their tomb," the Shepherd captain goes on, adding that any further attempt to rescue them would be an act of war, before closing the channel. Pike orders the crew to get through to the landing party, even if they had to break the laws of physics to do so.

Inside the temple, Uhura continues her scans of the egg, while La'an and Spock check on Kirk's condition, which appears to be stable. La'an then coldly asks about Uhura's progress, whether she would get them out or get them killed. Uhura replies it was a "toss-up". As she works, Uhura begins humming to herself again, something Spock notices as a sign of distress, telling her the situation was less dire than it had been. Plus, Kirk had found one thing to avoid, which increased her odds of success. Uhura asks if that was his version of a pep talk, and he concedes it was, and had been working on them, before asking her opinion. She notes he shouldn't "take [his] foot off the gas" on that one. Spock reminds her she was achieving her stated objective of learning new alien languages. Uhura says only that, like Spock had implied,

she wasn't supposed to be there at all, someone "actually Starfleet". Spock asks, given that it was her first away mission, if it was also the first time her life had been in danger, and she confirms it was. Spock notes that confrontations with one's mortality gave them an outside perspective. She did not intend to be there, but she was there, and she was the only person for the job. "Will you rise to see it through?" he concludes. Uhura says that pep talk was better, before returning to work, humming to herself. Spock notices a resonance within the chamber; it was reacting to the humming. She hums some more, noticing the effect as well, and realizing the chamber was responsive to music.

Back on the Enterprise, Una has been unable to reach the landing party, but is detecting a signal coming from the comet itself. Putting it on speaker, it is a melodic tune, almost like wind chimes, and a tune Pike recognizes. He asks the computer to identify the song — "Vamuvamba", a traditional song from Kenya on Earth. Pike knows this is not a coincidence.

Inside the temple, the chamber harmonizes with Uhura's vocalizations, and Spock sees that the lights and sounds respond differently to different pitch. Kirk had thought the markings to be some kind of code, and Uhura theorizes that the code was harmonic. Harmonics were the ratio between frequencies, each musical note corresponding to a certain frequency. La'an wonders why an alien race would write music the same way they did. Spock replies that musical notes are easily derived from math, and the Vulcans theorized their fundamental nature makes them pleasing to the ear. Uhura asks one of them to match her pitch, as she begins humming a single note. La'an stays out of it, saying she would probably break the thing, and so Spock joins her, their vocalizations matching the harmonics until, finally, the egg opens, and the room is radiating with light. La'an thinks this is a step closer to solving the "genius or get us all killed" conundrum, to which Uhura says it was the "right time for genius". A series of eerie melodies echoes through the room, which Spock speculates is the comet's method of communication. La'an wonders how that could be used to convince it to lower the force field. To answer, Uhura vocalizes to the same melody, and the room begins to shake.

It seems to have the desired effect; aboard the Enterprise, Una detects the shield dropping. Pike orders the transporter room to beam them out. Chapel rushes to the transporter room as the landing party returns, and helps La'an take Kirk to sickbay. Knowing how the Shepherds will likely react, Pike orders red alert. Christina reports the Shepherds were hailing, and Pike orders the channel open. The Shepherd captain accuses him of attempting to interfere, and is not interested in Pike's assertion to help find some common ground. "You were warned," is all the captain says before closing the channel. Ortega sarcastically thinks that went well, just as the ship is shaken by weapons impacts. The Shepherd vessel has launched torpedoes at them, and Pike orders the crew to brace for impact.

The Enterprise flies evasively to avoid the Shepherds' weapons fire. La'an asks if they should return fire, but Pike refuses, continuing to order evasive maneuvers. La'an suggests warping out and regrouping, as facing off alone would be suicide. Una is forced to agree, given the Shepherds' advanced technology. Spock explains his theory that the comet was trying to communicate with them through the music they recorded, but Uhura warns the analysis of the sounds could take days. Spock points out that the comet would impact Persephone III in less than an hour. Pike orders phasers locked onto the Shepherds' weapons and propulsion systems, and has Ortega bring them about into firing position. A single phaser blast scores a direct hit, forcing the Shepherds to pull back and regroup, giving the Enterprise a minute to regroup as well. Pike saw how they were able to lower the comet's shields, so asks about moving the comet itself. Ortega is sure the "crazy space monks" will destroy them if they try to move it, which sets Spock to thinking: What if the comet moved itself?

The Enterprise accelerates to full impulse, and the Shepherds are gaining on them. Pike asks Ortega if she remembered how she bragged about how she'd be the best pilot to graduate the Academy (saying only "word gets around" at her surprised look). When Ortega asks what his point was, Pike tells her it was time to prove it, by getting them in front of that comet. Ortega initiates an evasive pattern of her own devising, taking the ship into the comet's tail while the Shepherds pursue them. Though they score several hits, the Shepherds stop firing when they realize the comet is in their firing arc. The Shepherds are trying to hail them, but Pike tells them not to reply yet. The only impacts the Enterprise takes now are from the cometary debris before reaching the front of the comet. Ortega brings the ship about and to a full stop, and Pike orders all systems except life support disabled, before responding to the Shepherds. Pike

offers his surrender, as his ship appears to have suffered from total systems failure. When the Shepherd captain asks what would happen if he didn't accept, Pike replies that the Enterprise will collide with the comet, igniting the trilitium resin in the warp core and utterly destroying it, which will also occur if the Shepherds destroy the ship themselves. He asks for the Shepherds' help, promising not to touch M'hanit again. The Shepherd captain does not reply, instead closing the channel. Una warns that Pike is taking a big gamble, to which Pike is aware. A moment later, the bluff seems to pay off; the Shepherds activate a tractor beam.

"Mr. Spock, you're up," Pike says. Spock is aboard the shuttlecraft Galileo, which has clung to the underside of one of the larger chunks of debris, and now approaches the comet's nucleus. The shuttle's shields begin radiating heat, which causes the comet to begin to fracture. Spock maintains position, activating the heat shields, though is forced to avoid a large piece of the comet in very close proximity. Aboard the Enterprise, Una consults her console, showing that the sublimation was working; the comet's course was being diverted, and Pike notes for the record that they did not actually touch it, keeping his word to the Shepherds. Uhura wonders what has become of Spock, before a hint of static comes over the comms... followed by the sound of Spock laughing. Pike wonders if everything was alright, and Spock confirms it was, again quoting Pike's belief that "sometimes things go so badly that you just have to laugh", earning a chuckle from the bridge crew. Both Spock and Una observe a large quantity of water vapor entering Persephone III's atmosphere, which would change the atmospheric composition to decrease the planet's aridity and promote plant growth... and with it, perhaps, societal development. The Shepherds hail again, the captain remarking on "the glory and the mercy that is M'hanit", and Pike agrees that they had witnessed a miracle. Perhaps in the future, the Shepherd captain adds, the Federation would not be so quick to judge the faith of others, and now, they need not part as enemies. The crew is relieved as the channel closes. On the surface, the Deleb are amazed to see water coming from the sky, and laugh with joy at the idea, as the comet continues to cross the sky.

"Captain's log, supplemental. I am left to wonder... who made the comet? How many more like it are out there? Was it coincidence that fostered the chance for more life on Persephone III? Or something more?"

In the conference room, Uhura explains that they had already figured out how to convert musical notes to numbers, but she figured out how to turn the numbers into numerical coordinates. Pike asks if the coordinates painted a picture, and Uhura confirms it, but not just any kind of picture. It showed a star chart of its movements through the Persephone system, including a course that took it past Persephone III, meaning it did not intend to impact the planet. If Spock had not done his work with the shuttle, however, it would have impacted the planet, and Uhura admits this is where it got "weirder": The comet's message indicated a chunk of ice that would have broken off from it as it passed by, which was completely identical in size and shape to the chunk that broke off when Spock flew his mission, which meant the comet knew about it before Spock corrected its course. The comet's trajectory, and its apparent mission to seed Persephone III with life, was apparently predicated on the idea that Spock would have to fly the shuttle to move it, meaning it had foreknowledge of the future. "It knew its fate, you might say," she sums up. This strikes something of a chord with Pike, who smiles at the thought and thanks her for the report.

Spock walks with Uhura in the corridor, recalling what he had said about many dreaming of being in Starfleet and representing its values of selflessness, courage, and sacrifice. Uhura begins to say that she knew it shouldn't have been her down there, but Spock cuts her off, as he hadn't finished. He admits that the odds of their survival had been quite low, and that no pep talk could have increased them. He understands she did not come to Starfleet the way many of them did, and indeed wasn't sure she wanted to stay. However, after her actions on the comet, he expresses his certainty that, should she choose to stay, Starfleet would be fortunate to have her. Uhura lets that thought sink in as Spock continues through the ship.

In his cabin, Pike observes the comet continuing on its course, marveling at how a little piece of ice and dust roaming through space could bring life. Una bets that none of them could have predicted how, and Pike agrees; Una goes on to say that receiving a message from the future didn't mean they understood it. Pike recognizes they were not talking about the comet anymore.

Una urges him not to throw his life away. Pike thinks he accepted his fate, but Una is not convinced, asking if he might be wrong, if he could save the cadets and that would be it. How did he know he couldn't make a different choice, one that would save him? What if his fate is what he made it?

Alone afterwards, Pike asks the computer to bring up the files on certain Federation citizens, the names of people who are children in the present, but will be Starfleet cadets in the future...

Ghosts of Illyria

Season 1
Episode Number: 3
Season Episode: 3

Originally aired: Thursday May 19, 2022
Writer: Akela Cooper, Bill Wolkoff
Director: Leslie Hope
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokin (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Sage Arrindell (Rukiya), Andre Colquhoun (Probasco), Daniel Gravelle (Ensign Lance), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer), André Dae Kim (Chief Kyle), Cameron Roberts (Manu Noonien-Singh), Gia Sandhu (T'Pring), Prosha Hussein (Sick Crew Member #1)
Summary: Una must confront a secret she's been hiding when a contagion ravages the ship, incapacitating the rest of the crew.



"First officer's log, stardate 1224.3. The Enterprise has arrived at Hetemit IX, the site of an abandoned Illyrian colony. Illyrians are a humanoid species known for modifying their genes to enhance their capabilities and levels of function. However, because genetic modification is forbidden in the Federation, they have always been outcasts. Our presence here is part of a standing mission to discover what hap-

pened to them. Unfortunately, research time on the surface is limited, as the planet is regularly swept by ion storms, one of which is fast approaching."

The USS Enterprise is in orbit around Hetemit IX, an abandoned colony of the Illyrians, a humanoid race considered outcasts by the Federation due to their use of genetic engineering. On the surface, Captain Pike comments on how genetic modification still put people on edge — even Una, who is standing next to him. She replies simply that she doesn't like loose ends. As the storm approaches, both see the flimsy shelters as little protection, and Una suggests returning to the ship. Pike orders the landing party to collect their data and return to the rendezvous point for transport. He attempts to communicate with Spock, but storm interference blocks his signal. He tells Una to gather the rest of the team, while he goes to find Spock. One of the landing party crew, an Ensign Lance, is peering into a cabinet full of glassware used in scientific research, noticing it seem to react to his flashlight, when Pike spots him and gestures for him to move out.

Una assembles her team at the rendezvous point and calls up for transport. Transporter chief Kyle struggles to get a transporter lock due to storm interference. He calls to Commander Hemmer in engineering asking for power. Hemmer transfers auxiliary power, then calls the bridge to warn them he is tapping into the emergency backups. In the corridors of the ship, the lights

flicker as the power is transferred, while the lights in engineering become brighter. Hemmer tells Kyle to try the transporter again. Kyle is stunned at the amount of power he has, to which Hemmer replies simply that he was a genius, before warning the chief to move quickly. This time, the transport is successful, but Una expresses the hope that Kyle was not out of miracles just yet; the captain and Spock were still on the surface.

Inside one of the colony's laboratories, Pike catches up to Spock, who reports that he has found a previously undiscovered cache of journals that may be of scientific relevance, adding that he looks forward to reading them. Pike urges him to hurry to the rendezvous point before the storm overtook them, so he could read them. They reach the rendezvous, and Pike calls up for transport. But again, Kyle is unable to get a lock, and this time, extra power will not help; the storm is too strong. Una tells Pike to find shelter until the storm passes. Pike acknowledges, and asks Spock for suggestions. Spock simply suggests they run.

Una arrives on the bridge to inform the crew that Pike and Spock were still on the surface. Until they could be retrieved, the crew would continue to do their jobs. She asks Uhura if she can get a signal to the surface, but Uhura reports the storm is a communications blackout. Una tells her to inform her immediately once she is able to communicate with the captain. To Lieutenant Wheeler at the science station, Una orders round-the-clock sensor sweeps, and also wants Chief Kyle on standby with the transporter.

Roaming through deck 14, Lieutenant Ortega finds Ensign Lance removing his uniform and staring at a wall console. He thinks the ship is too dark, and begins to rub his face up against one of the light panels in the corridor, saying he wants to feel the light on his skin, which slightly unnerves Ortega, who tries to continue on her way. He then runs his head through the glass of the panel, leading Ortega to call for security. In her quarters, Una is experiencing a similar effect, tearing open her own uniform tunic and basking in the light. Her skin begins to take on a reddish glow, before reason snaps back; she realizes something is wrong. She calls Dr. M'Benga in sickbay, asking about the status of the landing party. M'Benga reports that he has several members of the party in sickbay right now, and in fact was just about to call her. While she assures him she herself is fine, the doctor asks her to come to sickbay anyway, just to be sure. As she heads out, she looks at herself in the mirror, a worried expression on her face.

As Nurse Chapel attends to some of the others, M'Benga tells Una what he has seen: half of the landing party have burned or shocked themselves on sources of illumination, and yet the light was the only thing calming them. Something is attracting them to light, and they will go through any means to get to it. When M'Benga asks if she has experienced similar symptoms, Una falsely tells him she hasn't, before asking if there was any sign of contagion. Though the biofilters in the transporter would detect anything abnormal, the doctor ran viral and bacterial scans anyway, and found nothing. The only thing he detected was a severe drop in vitamin D levels. Were it not for that and for their aberrant behavior, no one would have guessed they were sick. He shows Una's vitamin D levels to be normal, but suggests taking a blood sample just in case. She is hesitant for some reason, but agrees nonetheless. M'Benga expresses the hope that the captain and Spock, still on the surface, have not been exposed to whatever is causing the problem, thinking that the landing party came into contact with something on the surface that the biofilters missed.

In engineering, Una brings this possibility up to Hemmer, who dismisses it as "nonsense". The biofilters would have removed any contamination during transport... unless, Una suggests, it was something they wouldn't be programmed to filter out. Hemmer assures her it was impossible, as the transporter would filter out anything it didn't recognize. She then wonders if storm interference could have caused it; short of turning the landing party into "bio-organic stew", Hemmer again denies it. Una then suggests that the emergency power could have affected the biofilters, but again, Hemmer shoots that down. However, sensing her exasperation, he reluctantly agrees to conduct a level 5 diagnostic scan of the ship's power systems, which he grumpily adds would probably take all night.

Back on the bridge, Una is able to briefly speak to Pike; he and Spock are alright, but are trapped in the colony's library due to the storm. Una begins to explain about what M'Benga has discovered, but before they can go much further, the storm interference blocks the signal again. Going into the conference room, she calls up the computer's records on Illyrian genetic modifications, specifically pertaining to disease control; she then specifies any record pertaining to the original Illyrian settlement in the Vaultera Nebula. The computer reports the records are

limited. Behind her, La'an enters, having been summoned. Una informs her about the potential contamination brought up from the surface, and tells her to have security on the lookout for strange behavior. La'an sees the computer screen's information about the Illyrians, wondering if they were somehow involved. Una is unsure, saying she is just doing research. La'an thinks the Illyrians' history is one of the reasons why the Federation is wary of genetically-modified species. Una thinks that if the Illyrians were behind the problem, they could also provide the solution, but Illyrian medical technology was banned by Federation regulations, mainly because of the Eugenics Wars. Una knows La'an is all too familiar with that time period: the security chief is a descendant of Khan Noonien Singh, and La'an admits that one could not have a bioengineered mass murderer for an ancestor without growing a thick skin. She studied Khan extensively as a child, and thought the worst of it would be being bullied by the other children. La'an suddenly expresses similar symptoms to the landing party, saying the room was too dark. Una immediately calls M'Benga.

La'an is sedated in sickbay, suffering from the same vitamin D deficiency as the landing party. La'an had not been on the landing party, but Chapel checked the contact tracing, and found she had shared a turbolift with Lance. The contagion seems to be spreading, but M'Benga is unable to determine how. He recommends locking down the ship to keep it from spreading. Una opens a ship-wide channel, and initiates the lockdown. All non-essential personnel were confined to quarters, and all on-duty personnel were to remain in their work areas, all until further notice.

On the surface, the storm rages, and Pike and Spock remain trapped in the library. The captain paces restlessly, to which Spock quotes a Human metaphor about how "a watched kettle never boils". Pike corrects it to "pot", yet expresses the belief that they would still get hit with the scalding water. There were sick people on his ship, and he was stuck on the surface. Spock admonishes him that anxious pacing would not help the situation. Pike stops, looking out at the storm; he sarcastically calls it "fun" and suggests selling tickets. Spock has been reading the journals he found, and learned that the Illyrians on Hetemet wanted to join the Federation, reversing their genetic modifications, or "de-engineering" themselves as Spock puts it. Pike asks if there was any record of what happened to the colony. Spock is only halfway through the records, so Pike tells him to skip to the end before the storm destroys the building they were in. Just then, both look out upon hearing a shrieking sound, and see figures of light moving through the air. Pike asks if Spock saw what he did, and Spock confirms he had... but as to what he saw, he was not sure.

Uhura is awakened in her sleep cubicle by light radiating from the closed door. As she opens it, she finds two members of the crew standing around a simulation of a sun, and tells the computer to end the simulation. The two crewmen demand to know what she had done, as they needed light. The contagion is spreading; nearly fifty members of the crew were now in sickbay, forcing M'Benga to open the auxiliary bay to handle the overflow. Chapel reports contact tracing was all over the place; some were getting it from being down the hall from an infected person. Meanwhile, Uhura appeared to be fine, despite her contact with the two infected crewmen. Just then, Hemmer enters, and Una asks if he found anything. The Aenar engineer sarcastically replies that of course he had, because he wandered the ship in the middle of the night running diagnostics for fun; he returns to business, telling M'Benga that he needed to run a check on the emergency medical transporter for excess power usage. M'Benga protests that he was running an experiment while Hemmer runs his checks. As he does, the lights in sickbay suddenly dim, Hemmer noting the systems check should not have affected the lights. M'Benga tells him to stop messing with the system, as he was making things worse. "Point taken," Hemmer replies caustically, as he leaves. After he does, M'Benga reactivates the lights, much to the relief of the distressed crew.

On the surface, Pike notes the source of the sounds seems to be gone. Spock's reading of the journals indicates that the colonists thought there were creatures living in the ion storms, a possibility which appears to have been confirmed. Just then, one of the creatures attempts to enter the open door, but Pike and Spock force it shut. Spock sustains a slight slash to his neck, which was close to hitting where the carotid artery would be on a Human. The creature begins to pound on the door, leading Pike to ask how long the door would hold. Spock suggests weighing probability in their favor; he appears to have an idea.

In the quarters Uhura shared with the two infected crew, Una asks the cadet to take her through why she was not affected when the others were. Uhura explains that she prefers to sleep

in pitch black conditions, comparing it to "The Princess and the Pea". As she demonstrates for herself, Una comes to a realization, and returns to sickbay. She explains to M'Benga and Chapel and Uhura was exposed to the same contagion, but she had been in the dark. Electromagnetic scans of the ship showed that the contagion seemed to travel through light waves, something M'Benga considers both insidious and remarkable. The infection they were dealing with affected the pleasure centers of the brain when close to light, but light was literally everywhere. Una suggests shutting down the lights all over the ship, but Chapel points out that sickbay was full of "light addicts". Una wonders if it would be too intrusive to sedate them all, but given the alternatives, M'Benga is forced to concede it was the best option.

With that, all of the lights onboard the Enterprise go dark.

In the conference room, Una has the computer narrow the search parameters to Illyrian genetic modifications. The computer warns they were classified, but Una overrides, then narrows the parameters further to modifications relating to disease control, which are again classified, and which she again overrides. She sees a child patient in the records, showing the same red glow to her skin that Una had experienced alone in her quarters. Just then, the computer alerts her to a blackout override in the transporter room, with the added danger of a critical circuit overload. Una calls down to the transporter room, but receives no response, and so goes down there herself. Hemmer is at the controls, having transported a piece of the planet's mantle; he too is experiencing the same symptoms, saying he wants to "feel the radiance on [his] skin". Una sees a phaser on the console, and warns that the temperature was more than a thousand degrees. Hemmer gleefully replies it was closer to ten thousand, and has almost stabilized the signal. As he approaches it, Una grabs the phaser and stuns him, before reversing the beam. She carries him over her shoulder to sickbay.

On the planet below, Pike has barricaded the door and drawn his own phaser, while Spock continues to examine the record cylinder. Pike asks if it too had a stun setting, to which Spock replies he was arming them with knowledge. The captain wonders if the Illyrians knew how to stop the creatures, but even if they did not, Spock thinks they could learn from the colonists' misfortune. The creatures did not kill the Illyrians; in fact, they began to appear just as the colonists were dying out due to a mysterious disease. Pike begins to feel his ears pop; the atmospheric pressure was increasing due to the storm. Just then, the creatures break through the door, disarming Pike; at the same time, the window shatters, forcing Pike and Spock to fall flat to the floor. The creatures seem to shield them from the storm's effects, which gradually dissipate. Pike notes that once again, the creatures were gone. Spock concurs, and adds that thanks to the creatures, they were not.

Una enters sickbay with Hemmer over her shoulder, and tells M'Benga and Chapel to sedate him before he recovers from the stun. M'Benga reports that he will have to be next, as his vitamin levels were also dropping, and now only he and Chapel were left. Una asks about the blood sample M'Benga took earlier, before finally admitting that she was immune to the illness because she was herself Illyrian. But both M'Benga and Chapel are adamant that even with that knowledge, they could not use her blood to help. Going into his office while Chapel attends to awakening patients, M'Benga explains that there were no novel antibodies in Una's blood, consistent with Illyrian biology; her system did not attack the infection, but literally burnt it out, which meant that he had nothing to work with anyway. If he had been present at the moment of her infection, he could have, but now he saw no other option. Una tells him he was a Starfleet doctor, and could figure out a way. M'Benga sees she places a lot of faith in Starfleet, and Una admits they were right about a lot of things, but not all of them. M'Benga understands that prejudice has kept people from helping each other for centuries, with no scientific justification, and even after meeting their neighbors in the stars, they found new bigotries — first about mixing Human and Vulcan blood, and now Human and Illyrian. To M'Benga, that did not matter, as he was a physician; he would beg her to help if she could, "regulations be damned", but he knows she can't. He pleads with her to sedate him before he lost control, and reluctantly she does. As the doctor goes unconscious, the computer warns that the containment field generator on the warp core had been deactivated, potentially leading to a warp core breach. Una rushes out to find Chapel unconscious on the floor, and La'an gone.

La'an is at the containment field console, bringing down the containment field. Una pleads with her to stop, but La'an is obsessed with flooding the ship with light. They struggle over control of the console, Una pleading with La'an that she knew her, that she was her friend. La'an

spits back that Una had lied to her for years, that she was an Augment, an "abomination", just like what the children had called her because of her name. Una knocks La'an unconscious with a punch, but the radiation levels in engineering have grown toxic to organic life, causing her Illyrian healing factor to kick in as the computer warns of the imminent core breach.

On the surface, the storm appears to have cleared, and Pike again tries to call the Enterprise, but is answered only with static. He thinks it safe to go outside again, and remarks on how the creatures had gone to great lengths to save their lives. If that was the case, why didn't they do so for the colonists? Spock sees two possibilities: Either one, they were not motivated to save the colonists due to some previous interaction... or two, they were the colonists. Spock had found references to odd behavior relating to the previously-mentioned disease. The infected had a compulsion for light, and some were driven to insanity and driven into the storms themselves. Pike wonders if that wouldn't have killed the colonists, and Spock confirms it, though theorizes that the charged particles would have bonded with the colonists' electromagnetic presence, creating what they saw. As they speak, a second record cylinder pops out, as if on its own. It is a thorough account of the colonists' effort to renounce their genetic engineering in order to join the Federation. "It would seem even in death," Spock concludes, "they wanted us to be aware of who they really were."

As they walk out to the rendezvous point, Spock notes how some Illyrians were bioengineered to fight disease. Had they not tried to reverse their augmentation, they might not all have died. "They wanted to join the Federation so badly, their good-faith gesture got them killed," Pike agrees grimly.

In sickbay, Una brings M'Benga back to consciousness, and explains she had an antidote. La'an had tried to jump into the warp core, and both were exposed to lethal doses of radiation, but Una's healing ability was able to save them both before she re-engaged the field. Chapel adds that La'an was not Illyrian, but her proximity to Una created chimeric antibodies in her system, and Chapel was able to synthesize them into a cure before they set. "Don't thank me, I know I'm good at my job," Chapel cheerfully adds. M'Benga tells Una that they all owed her their lives, but Una looks grim for a moment; there was something she had to take care of.

La'an sits alone in the recreation room, eating from a bowl of strawberries, as Una sits across from her. Una remarks she packs "a hell of a punch", which was not meant as a compliment. La'an asks what the penalty for striking a superior officer is, but Una "can't seem to remember", asking if they were still friends. La'an admits that part of what she said was the sickness talking, but part of it was her own hatred of Augments, given how she had been treated being a descendant of Khan, and understanding why Augments were banned in the Federation, as they had nearly destroyed Earth. Una acknowledges the damage Augments had done, but Illyrians were different, seeking to collaborate with nature, not dominate it. Instead of terraforming planets, they adapted themselves instead, and Una sees nothing wrong with that. La'an counters by asking if Una really felt that, why hide it, particularly from her? Una admits she's hidden it from a lot of people, but all she had ever wanted, since first seeing the stars, was to be in Starfleet. La'an knows, as Una had given her that dream, and also introduced her to strawberries as a "comfort food".

Una stands before Pike, returned from the surface, and confesses she is an Illyrian. By hiding her augmentations and enlisting in Starfleet, she has committed a Federation offense, and announces she is resigning her commission and submitting herself for disciplinary action, asking only that her sincere desire to be in Starfleet be taken into consideration. Pike rejects her resignation, saying he doesn't care where she's from, and calling her the best first officer in the fleet. Pike attempts to stop her from going further, but Una warns him that she has broken a dozen regulations, lying to get into Starfleet, and if he shelters her, Starfleet would go after him as well. Pike replies that he would welcome that discussion, and tells her that he learned something on Hetemit IX: Illyrians were severely misunderstood, and Una's actions during the crisis only emphasized that point. Una says that she only did her job, but Pike replies that she defies every stereotype the Federation had about Illyrians. When she asks what Starfleet would do when they found out, Pike chuckles and tells her to let him worry about Starfleet. Before she goes, he tells her to look into fixing the glitch in the transporter's biofilters.

Una goes down to sickbay and confronts M'Benga, knowing that he didn't allow the medical transporters to be upgraded while the ship was in spacedock. She suspects that was because M'Benga couldn't allow them to do so, and reveals that Hemmer's diagnostic showed that some-

thing was being kept in the pattern buffer, and whatever it was, he had to preserve it, even if it meant killing everyone on the ship. M'Benga denies that was his intention, and says it was an accident. Una demands to know what he was keeping in there that could have been worth all of their lives. "Not what," he quietly corrects her. "Who." He explains he was keeping his daughter Rukiya in the pattern buffer; she had been diagnosed with cygnokemia one year earlier, and was given twelve weeks to live. He ruefully notes how he was the chief medical officer aboard the Federation flagship, and one would think he could do something about it, but nothing he had tried worked. He explains there was no limit to how long a pattern could be kept in the buffer, only having to materialize them regularly. In the buffer, Rukiya did not age, and the disease did not progress. On a ship that could travel light years in a matter of hours, M'Benga is sure somewhere out there is a planet with the discovery he needed. Nonetheless, he realizes the light virus epidemic had been his fault, never thinking that could have happened, and promises it would not happen again. However, before he is returned to Starfleet, he asks that he be allowed a moment to say goodbye to his daughter. Una surprises him by offering to have a dedicated power source directed from the warp core, to ensure the problem did not happen again. As she leaves, she tells him she looks forward to meeting Rukiya one day. After she leaves, M'Benga activates the privacy screen in his office and brings Rukiya out of the buffer, and picks up a story he was reading her from where he left off. Rukiya protests that he had read the story a hundred times, but the doctor jokes that perhaps the story's ending could change.

In her quarters, Una dictates an entry into her log, mentioning how people had things to hide, yet were revealing themselves. M'Benga had shown what he was hiding, and Una had admitted the truth about herself to Pike, who had defended her. Yet she can't help but wonder: if she had not helped save the crew, would he have felt the same? What if she had not been "one of the good ones"? "When will it be enough to just be an Illyrian?" she wonders... before she asks the computer to delete the log entry. As the Enterprise departs Hetemet IX and goes to warp, M'Benga continues to read from the story:

"If King Ridley would seek out the Mercury Stone and win it as his own, his victory over Queen Neve would be assured. It is said that in the right hands, the Mercury Stone has the power to cleanse the land of evil and bring prosperity to all. But if it were to fall into the wrong hands, the Mercury Stone's power would bring about a terrible, long-lasting dark age across the land."

Memento Mori

Season 1
Episode Number: 4
Season Episode: 4

Originally aired: Thursday May 26, 2022
Writer: Davy Perez, Beau DeMayo
Director: Dan Liu
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokun (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Angela Besharah (Thandie), Ava Cheung (Young La'an), Kaylee Harwood (Lt. Parker), André Dae Kim (Chief Kyle), Johnathan James Mitchell (Young Jaivarn (voice)), Oscar Moreno (Crewman Zuniga), Cameron Roberts (Manu Noonien-Singh), Gia Sandhu (T'Pring), Sophia Webster (Fig)
Summary: Pike must find unconventional Starfleet methods to deal with a malevolent force that attacks the Enterprise.



"Security officer's log, stardate 3177.3. The Enterprise is currently en route to deliver an atmospheric processor upgrade to Finibus III. Without our assistance, the air on this remote colony will become unbreathable in a matter of weeks. As we prepare for our arrival, we pause to remember Starfleet Remembrance Day."

In her quarters, La'an looks down at a pin commemorating the loss of the SS Puget Sound, the colony ship she had grown up on. Throughout the ship, the other members of the crew are wearing similar pins, including Captain Pike, who addresses the entire ship. Many of them knew someone who had made the ultimate sacrifice: officers, scientists, and civilians who had given their lives for the hope of galactic peace. Exploration could exact a heavy toll, and there was nothing more devastating to a captain than losing a member of the crew. For those left behind, they would wear the insignia of past ships they had served on. "As we honor the lives that have been given, let us also be grateful to be still on the journey," he concludes.

Walking through the ship, Hemmer quizzes Uhura about the essential purpose of the AP 350 device. Uhura replies simply it was an air filter, earning a contemptuous reply from the chief engineer about how cadets never read the assignment material in advance. Uhura proves him wrong by stating it had been invented by Zigwel Orgon in 2234 and first used after the Crestbrock mining collapse on Titan, and that it used charged positron rods to stabilize the ion matrix, which then filtered the air. Hemmer gives her points for that, remarking on how most cadets labored through their rotation to engineering while dreaming of command. Uhura, however, is enjoying the work, saying that linguistics and engineering were very similar, in that they were dependent on how seemingly unrelated systems communicated. Hemmer is not impressed, saying that if

she truly wanted to impress him, she would do a lot better than theorize. "Challenge accepted," is Uhura's answer.

La'an arrives on the bridge, where Una notes she is not wearing her commemoration pin. La'an waves it off as "no big deal", and that the past was the past. Una thinks closure had its reasons, and Starfleet had resources, but La'an cuts her off, saying she was not going to allow a doctor inside her head to try and "fix" her; she was not broken, she was fine. As she takes her station, Ortegas reports from the helm that they were in orbit. Pike wonders where the "welcome wagon" is, and Christina at communications reports no signals coming from the surface, with the colony logs indicating the last transmission being two days earlier. Spock speculates the nearby brown dwarf might be disrupting communications, but soon finds the true cause: the colony's communications satellite has been destroyed. Pike asks if it was accidental, but Spock is unable to say. The captain orders him to report it to Starfleet, while telling the crew that protocol dictated they investigate on the ground, and make no assumptions until they gathered intelligence. Una goes to prep a landing party, and orders La'an to join her.

Beaming to the surface, the colony is deserted; there were supposed to be several hundred people there. Ensign Todd can detect no Human life signs. Una wonders if it was a rushed evacuation, and La'an recognizes blast marks, meaning if they did rush, they did so while under fire. Una spreads the team out, leading one half; the other sees a room with cracked glass, only to be given a slight jump scare by a barking dog. La'an then finds something, and calls Una and the others over. It was the site of a massacre, not an evacuation, with blood trails showing the victims being dragged to that location... but there was no sign of their bodies.

In orbit, the Enterprise detects an unidentified ship. Pike informs the landing party and has them beamed back aboard. Ortegas sees it has no Federation badges, and that its shields were up, while Spock detects multiple life forms he was unable to identify. Pike orders hailing frequencies on all channels, but Christina reports no response. Just as Pike orders yellow alert and shields raised, Christina now reports they were being hailed. The channel opens to reveal a bloodied but otherwise unharmed Human woman, who identifies herself as Professor Thandie, who is glad to see it was a Starfleet ship, and apologizes for not answering earlier, as they needed to be sure. Most of the people onboard their ship were injured, and life support was overextended; in addition, it was a cargo ship used to transport radioactive ore, so their hull was resistant to transporters. Pike orders Zuniga at the security station to prepare a deep space transport tube, and asks Thandie what happened. The professor explains that a blast from the sky took out the main colony structure, and they all heard a loud ringing sound, but it was a blur after that. Pike glances at Spock, who reports no sign of any other ships or residual warp signatures. Pike reassures Thandie that everything would be alright.

The Enterprise deploys the transport tube, connecting to the cargo vessel, and brings the survivors onboard for examination in sickbay. Thandie expresses gratitude for the rescue, and Una tells her they were still trying to figure out who attacked them, asking if anyone saw anything. The professor recalls a farmer saw streaks in the sky, like "rain on fire". There were about a hundred survivors, La'an notes, asking what happened to the rest of them. Thandie does not know, only waking up to find everyone gone — no bodies, just blood. As the professor joins the others heading to sickbay, Una and La'an reveal what they know. The "ringing" could have been caused by an ultrasonic cannon, while the "rain on fire" could have been sub-orbital plasma bombardment. Suddenly, a young girl named Fig runs through the corridors, screaming that "the monsters are coming". Her mother tries to assure her monsters aren't real, but La'an asks what "monsters" she is afraid of. Fig says the "monsters" took her father, and that she didn't see them, but heard them making a strange clicking sound. La'an is very familiar with that sound, as she calls to the bridge to scan for polarized EM signatures. Spock runs the scans, and detects a faint optical distortion near the second moon — a hologram. La'an shouts for shields to be raised, and Pike orders red alert. But Ortegas points out they can't raise the shields with the transport tube still attached.

Inside the tube, La'an looks outside one of the viewports, seeing a ship approaching them, and realizes the colony's attackers are the Gorn. As Una pulls La'an away, the Gorn vessel opens fire, destroying the cargo ship and the transport tube.

Briefly seeing an image of her brother Manu in her mind's eye, La'an regains consciousness as Nurse Chapel runs scans over her, then tells her to sit tight. Several members of the crew have been seriously injured, and La'an is distressed to see Fig's mother lying in the corridor.

Una, leaning against the wall, somberly tells her the woman didn't make it. La'an asks about the girl, but the first officer can only shake her head; she doesn't know. La'an sees Una is bleeding, but Una assures her she will be fine. Seeing the Gorn ship, La'an had "locked up", but Una had reported the situation to the captain, and tells her to report to the bridge; if she was right, they would need her up there.

Pike calls down to Hemmer that warp drive is offline; Hemmer is in the main cargo bay attempting to secure the processor, as it was unsafe while under fire. Pike orders him to work fast so he can restore warp power. Zuniga reports no response to hails. Pike asks Ortega how fast they could go at impulse; with damage to the starboard nacelle, she reports half speed. He orders an evasive pattern just as La'an enters, saying that they had to retreat, as they could not fight them. She emphasizes that it was the Gorn, setting them up to be vulnerable; the surviving colonists had been bait. The Enterprise was too damaged to stand and fight now, so they had to regroup and level the playing field. She again sees Manu, standing near the console across the bridge, then a second later he is gone. She pleads with Pike to trust her. Pike recalls the brown dwarf Spock detected earlier, and asks how far away it was. Spock detects it being two hundred million kilometers away, but it was also tethered around a black hole. Ortega worriedly asks how big a black hole, to which Pike tells her to focus on one problem at a time. Spock lays out the bottom line: the brown dwarf's central mass would crush the ship, but surrounding it was a volatile gas cloud. If they were to hide inside it, they would have to reduce all electrical output — the sensors, the communications, and most importantly the shields. Pike knows that if they had to, so would any pursuer. He turns to La'an, who is "acting Number One" again, and asks if she concurs. Without hesitation, she does. Pike orders full impulse to Spock's mark. The Gorn ship continues to fire on them as they maneuver into the cloud, and Spock reports that sickbay and its cargo stores just took a direct hit... as did the main cargo bay.

Inside the cargo bay, Uhura regains consciousness, and calls out for Hemmer. The chief engineer's right arm is crushed under a cargo container, and he asks her to help get it off. She is able to lift it just enough for him to get free. He can feel his hand is broken, and Uhura moves to escort him to sickbay. But as they stop, he knowingly asks if the door is blocked, and Uhura confirms it is. Just then, a new alarm begins going off — the coolant systems on the AP 350 are in critical failure.

Inside the conference room, Pike, La'an, Spock, and Ortega are joined on the screen by Hemmer, Uhura, and Dr. M'Benga. Pike asks how long before the atmospheric processor explodes; Hemmer, while fully aware that the AP 350's explosion would vaporize the entire ship, is confident he has enough time to repair it. With transporters offline, Pike is sending people to clear the way to the cargo bay. Until then, Hemmer reports he will be working on repairs, and closes the channel. Pike notices that the temperature has risen, and Spock reports that the ionic gas surrounding the ship is affecting the ship's climate controls, while other systems were offline. M'Benga adds that this includes sickbay; with no medical systems, they had essentially been reduced to triage. They also had nine confirmed casualties. Sickbay's supplies had been almost completely destroyed by the attack, and without the matter synthesizers, they couldn't make more once they ran out. Una has told him she was fine, but he has not been able to properly check up on her, as he was still playing catch-up; he had activated all of the backup medical personnel, but what he really needed was supplies. He is then called away by Chapel to check on a patient, and closes the channel as well.

Una enters sickbay, but almost immediately collapses to the deck. M'Benga points out she had said she was fine, and she admits she was mistaken; she had taken several deep puncture wounds from shrapnel, and they couldn't power up the surgical bays to remove them. M'Benga recalls that Chapel was interested in "archaeological medicine", and asks how good she was at sewing. "Aces," is Chapel's reply.

Back in the conference room, La'an goes over their options: they could not use their phasers, and when Pike asks about the photon torpedoes, which could be self-guided, she reports that the torpedo bay had been hit, and they were down to only one torpedo. Spock adds the number of torpedoes was inconsequential, because if they fired one off in the brown dwarf, it would cause the internal guidance systems to fail, and it would not go in the intended direction. Ortega is incredulous, asking what they did if they had no shields or weapons, and is also dismissive about it being the Gorn, calling them the "boogeyman", as no one had ever seen one. La'an, however, has seen the Gorn before, and while they were not supernatural, she did consider them to be

monsters. She condemns the Federation's belief that empathizing with enemies would one day make them friends, saying that some things in the universe were simply evil. She asks if they have ever seen eyes that are both dead and hungry at the same time, emphasizing that Humans were just prey to the Gorn, just "walking feedbags". She corrects Ortega's assumption, saying that plenty of people have seen the Gorn... they just don't live to tell about it. Pike ends the meeting by telling them all to be vigilant, and "get creative", calling them the best of Starfleet, and that they would survive by working together.

As the others leave, Pike asks La'an to stay a moment, and asks how she is holding up. La'an says simply that the enemy doesn't care about her feelings, so she doesn't waste her time having any. Pike concedes that may be true, but it doesn't seem that way to the crew. La'an has made clear that she does not care what the crew thinks about her, and that she has always been blunt, but Pike points out that right now, her job was not just about orders, it was about hope. He considers belief to be the difference between victory and defeat, and if one got a crew to believe in miracles, they might just deliver one. La'an accepts she has to make an adjustment, but makes clear she will not lie to the crew. "The best miracles are born from truth," Pike assures her. Since there was not much on the official record pertaining to the Gorn, he asks if there was anything she could recall that might help. She stammers that her memories were inhibited by trauma, as she again sees Manu, standing behind Pike. The captain simply asks her to tell if anything came to mind.

In the cargo bay, Hemmer laments that an engineer's most important tools were his hands and his mind, but he was unable to use the fingers on one hand. Uhura sits him down, as the alarms on the AP 350 continue to blare. She suggests that Hemmer talk her through the process, working as a team, but he thinks it was not that simple, as there was data only he could assess. Uhura points out that she was the only one with a working set of fingers. Hemmer is not particularly fond of teamwork, to which Uhura retorts that he should "get fond". He grudgingly agrees that he has to, and tells her to use the control panel to shut down the safety overrides, while also adjusting the cooling system. She only uses one set of controls, and he points out that the other hand is used to adjust the cooling system at the same time, warning her not to allow the core temperature to exceed 110 degrees.

On the bridge, Spock offers an idea to Pike, remembering how he'd challenged them to "get creative", and brings a tactical projection on screen. Though they had no primary sensors, the navigation systems constantly updated with atmospheric data to maintain stability. Ortega jokingly protests that she still does most of the work. The ship's movement in the gas cloud created oscillation in the atmosphere, converted into rotational motions by Coriolis forces, detected automatically by the nav-com. They could track the Gorn ship by marking the Coriolis force readings to triangulate their position. Pike recognizes it as essentially turning a compass into radar, and orders him to proceed. Sure enough, they detect a signal consistent with the attacking ship — and it was coming right at them. Ortega anxiously asks if she should make evasive maneuvers, but Pike orders her to hold it steady. As it gets closer, Ortega is about to spring into action to engage the enemy, but both Pike and La'an again tell her to hold steady. The Gorn ship goes right by; they can't see the Enterprise, but La'an warns they will not stop hunting. Pike orders Zuniga to arm the remaining torpedo. When Spock points out the guidance would not work, Pike assures him he was not going to fire it — he was going to drop it manually right on top of them. He orders Ortega to set a pursuit course, "quick but quiet". Ortega brings the ship directly over the Gorn vessel, and Pike orders the torpedo deployed. A slight shaking of the ship heralds the torpedo's detonation, and Spock reports the signal is gone — the Gorn ship has been destroyed. Just then, however, three more signals are detected approaching them, and Pike realizes that this was the Gorn's intention: sacrificing one ship to find their quarry. One of the incoming signals is a ship that is much larger than the others.

With the odds now three-on-one, La'an suggests retreat. Spock concurs, but points out that if they leave the gas cloud, they would be seen, and going closer to the brown dwarf's center mass would destroy the ship. Pike goes for the latter option, telling Ortega to take them as close as possible to the center mass. Ortega points out what Spock had just said about the density fields near the center crushing the ship, but Pike knows what would happen to them would also happen to the Gorn, and that he had faith in the Enterprise. La'an reports that the lower decks would be the first to take damage, and Pike orders all decks below 20 to be evacuated. He didn't like the idea any more than they did, but they had to do it, and orders Ortega to take them

down.

In sickbay, M'Benga and Chapel are left working with needle and thread to close Una's wounds, as the hull begins to noticeably creak from the pressure. It was also noticeable in the cargo bay, where Hemmer continues to guide Uhura in stabilizing the AP 350. Uhura has never heard a ship's hull make that sound before, but Hemmer tells her to keep her focus. Some of the positron rods are broken, but without diagnostics, she cannot tell which. Hemmer tells her the malfunctioning rods would be cool, and tells her to make sure before she pulls any out. She finds out, and is ecstatic when she is able to remove it. Before replacing it, she had to reconfigure the host platform, and she appears to be successful, but looks questioningly at the chief engineer when he says they could "get started".

On the bridge, Pike listens to the ominous creaking of the hull, and Spock reports the lower decks have begun to buckle. The evacuations are not complete, but Spock warns if it was not contained, the failure of the hull could end up decompressing the entire ship. Pike reluctantly orders the bulkheads sealed. Chief Kyle tries to help a wounded science officer through, but as the bulkheads begin to close, the other pushes Kyle through just as the hull collapses, leaving Kyle staring in shock at the sealed bulkhead and the fate of the crewman on the other side. La'an reports the reading to Pike, and Spock assures his captain he made the logical choice. It didn't feel that way to Pike, but Spock reminds him that he made the choice because he valued life. The hull collapse has begun to extend, and if it breached the antimatter containment, there wouldn't be a ship left to save. Pike becomes determined, remembering how La'an had told him about the Gorn wanting to take them prisoner, and promising "a hell of a fight" if they planned to take the Enterprise. He calls battle stations, and orders the crew to prepare for close quarters, before having Ortegas bring the ship to a full stop. One of the Gorn ships closes in, but as it approaches the Enterprise, it implodes from the atmospheric pressure. La'an had told Pike that the Gorn were relentless hunters, and he used that against them. He asks La'an for a damage report, before telling Spock to watch for the other two ships.

In sickbay, Chapel attends to some of the other patients, who appear to be doing well (all things considered), before returning to Una. One fragment remains in her body, close to her abdominal aorta. Chapel warns her that she will have to be sedated, as she would likely bleed a lot. They had just enough blood plasma, but they would have to introduce it intravenously. Una asks if she had a choice, and M'Benga tells her she could decline and wait for the sickbay systems to come back online, while Chapel adds she could also wait for septic shock, which she describes as "giving birth through your mouth". Una incredulously asks who talked like that, and Chapel replies that she did; M'Benga just gives her an amused glance as Una asks for the sedation. As the anesthesia is being introduced, one of the backup techs warns Chapel that the other patient needed plasma. Una hears this, and tells Chapel to give the plasma intended for her. M'Benga reminds her they only had that one bag left, and she was about to lose a massive amount of blood, but Una makes it an order.

"Captain's log, supplemental. Enterprise is currently in the center of a gas giant, hiding from an enemy we've never faced before. So far, three civilians and seven of my crew have lost their lives. The battle is far from over, but I am determined to keep everyone else alive. My newest obstacle is the presence of a nearby black hole."

Spock reports that the atmospheric density was decreasing, and the singularity is advancing its accumulation of substellar material. When La'an asks if he ever spoke in "plain English", Spock does so, saying that the brown dwarf they were hiding in was being sucked into the black hole. Pike sees the problem: if they stay, they would be taken with it. They could not leave the brown dwarf without being spotted by the Gorn, and they had no long-range communications, so they couldn't even send out a probe. In addition, within one hour, thirty-two minutes and forty-eight seconds, they would not be able to escape the black hole's gravity. La'an suggests sending out a shuttle, small enough to travel undetected and minimizing the risk to the rest of the crew. Pike thinks it a suicide mission, but La'an believes it was their only shot, and volunteers to pilot it. Spock agrees, and decides to join her, saying (in plain English) she would need backup. Pike reluctantly gives the go-ahead and tells them to take the Galileo, ordering them to be back within thirty minutes, no matter what.

Aboard the Galileo, Spock and La'an observe what appears to be the two remaining Gorn ships scanning each other. La'an, from her experience on the Puget Sound, knows it was not a

scan. While her memory is fragmented, she is certain she has seen the lights before. Spock notes the complexity of the mind, and how it built up defenses after being affected by trauma. La'an thinks there was something to it that she should know, a thought Spock finds understandable given the nature of their foe. La'an, aware of what Vulcans could do, suggests a mind meld. Spock reminds her that a meld was not a shortcut for dealing with mental trauma, and warns that resurfacing hidden memories could be painful, even dangerous. But if there was something in La'an's memory that could save the Enterprise, she felt she had to take the risk. Spock moves from his seat and kneels in front of her, placing one hand against her face, and initiates the meld.

As La'an's memories surface, she finds herself on a Gorn breeding planet, where the crew of the Puget Sound had been brought to feed the hatchlings and were hunted day and night. Spock can feel her mind resisting, because of La'an's fear. He asks if she wanted to stop, but La'an refuses, choosing to move forward. The memory of her younger self, running through the caverns with her brother Manu, resurfaces. The younger La'an apologizes, saying she had tried to be quiet, but Manu reassures her. He hands her his journal; he had observed the lights, knowing it was how the Gorn communicated, and believes it would help her hide, and tells her to take it and run. Becoming her current self in the memory, La'an pleads with her brother to come with her, but he knows he can't, and again tells her to run. She sees the journal, recognizing that Manu had begun to decipher their language and visual communication. She runs, finding herself back in the central cavern. Spock recognizes it was her subconscious setting up a boundary. She explains what she learned about the lights from her brother's journal. Just then, she hears Spock's voice speaking in Vulcan, followed by another voice saying she loved him as well. La'an can see he had lost someone as well, a sister, but Starfleet records didn't show him having a sibling. Spock curtly confirms they did not. La'an realizes his sister had sacrificed herself for him, to which Spock's only answer was that they should end the meld. She sees Manu's face one last time as the meld ends, tears running down her face... and then tells Spock she has an idea.

The shuttle takes position near the smaller of the two Gorn ships, and Spock has modulated the shuttle's phasers per La'an's instruction. She is surprised he agreed to the idea; he replies that it was a good plan, and the meld reminded him of the risks taken and their value to those that survive. She transmits a signal telling them that Humans have boarded the smaller ship and taken control, knowing that the Gorn would cull the weak, believing in survival of the fittest. Sure enough, the larger ship opens fire, destroying the smaller one, and evening the odds.

Back aboard the Enterprise, Uhura has finished rebooting the system for the AP 350, and sees that Hemmer is starting to fade from the pain and the shock of his injury. She tries to keep him talking, asking how an Aenar ended up in Starfleet, as she had thought they were all pacifists. Hemmer admits he had wanted to be a botanist, as he had a love for plants. He says that he will not fight for Starfleet, but would defend its ideals. To him, pacifism was not passivity, but the active protection of all living things in the natural universe. Uhura sees it as a matter of perspective, comparing it by using touch instead of sight, to which Hemmer replies he wouldn't know. Then a new alarm begins to sound from the processor: the ion matrix exceeded critical limits before they finished repairs. The only thing they could do now was vent the bay into space, and everything in it. Uhura points out that they were in there as well. "Unfortunately, that is also true," Hemmer agrees.

On the bridge, Pike listens as Hemmer reports that the AP 350 would explode within twenty minutes, maybe less. Spock and La'an return from their mission, and assume their stations. Just then, the shift shakes violently, and Ortegás reports it was caused by the black hole. The brown dwarf was dissolving too fast, and if they did not escape, they would be caught with it — but any effort at escape would bring the last Gorn ship right on top of them. Ortegás comments on how space wanted them dead, which gives Pike an idea: What if they let space win? He asks Spock if it was possible to use the black hole's gravity to slingshot their way to safety, and Spock concurs that it was mathematically possible, but points out that the Gorn would see them and pursue them. Pike thinks that a "maybe", and has Spock explain about gravitational redshift — an optical illusion caused by an object falling into a black hole, and the object falls faster than the frequency of light it emits, essentially making the object appear to stop just outside the black hole. Pike has one last question: What do snakes, ducks, and opossums have in common? La'an answers that when hunted, they play dead. Pike orders Ortegás to plot a course close to the black hole's event horizon, and asks Hemmer if he and Uhura had access to EV suits. Hemmer confirms they do, though hesitates to ask why. La'an sees the plan: Pike wanted to slingshot the

ship off the black hole, and use the AP 350 to decoy the Gorn. Spock reminds his captain that the plan involved flying close to one of the most turbulent phenomena in space, and Ortega adds that the hull was already compromised. Pike is confident the ship will hold, and La'an — thinking back to her prior discussion with Pike — agrees. The captain is also confident that if anyone could "surf a wave" on a black hole, it would be Ortega, who replies that he almost made it sound fun. He orders Hemmer and Uhura to suit up and strap in; they would vent the cargo bay on his signal.

In the cargo bay, Hemmer commits the AP 350 to the cosmos, while Uhura holds the strap that will secure them with a shaking hand. He grasps her arm with his good hand, and commends her; she had managed to impress him after all, and he would give her high marks on the assessment. Uhura thanks him, assuming that it would still matter. Hemmer notes how Humans worried so much about death, while the Aenar believe the end only comes when they have fulfilled their purpose. Uhura asks what his purpose was, and he replies simply "to fix what is broken". Uhura thinks he could add teaching, maybe being inspiring, to that as well, earning a chuckle from the chief engineer. He asks what she felt the purpose of her life's path was. Uhura admits she doesn't know, asking if that meant she wouldn't die. Hemmer's answer was that there was only one way to find out, as they secure themselves to the deck.

Zuniga reports the inertial dampeners were at maximum, and calls to brace for heavy gravity. Ortega half-jokingly says if they pulled it off, it would officially be called the "Pike Manuever". Pike orders a ship-wide channel. As he addresses the crew, Chapel and the sickbay techs set up force fields to contain the injured crew, while Hemmer and Uhura take up their helmets and prepare for the manuever. Pike reminds them of what was said earlier about the cost of exploration, and believes that there will always be something to challenge them, but they would not back down nor give in to fear. He is confident that this would not be their last mission, but their finest hour, and calls for the crew to brace for impact. The Gorn ship changes course as the Enterprise approaches the accretion disk of the black hole. As the ship "rides the wave", Pike gives the order to vent the cargo bay. Weighed down by the increased gravity, Spock strains to reach the controls, but manages to do so. In the cargo bay, Hemmer and Uhura are lifted up so violently that the plate securing Uhura to the deck begins to tear up. Hemmer grabs Uhura's arm, and they hold on for dear life. Outside the reach of the black hole's gravity, the Gorn detect the explosion of the AP 350. Thinking it to be the Enterprise, they fall back. A moment later, the Enterprise slingshots free of the black hole's gravity, battered and singed, but intact.

As the lights come back up, Pike asks for a report. La'an reports no sign of the Gorn ship. He then asks to see the main cargo bay, which only comes up with static. He hails them, anxiously waiting to hear from Hemmer or Uhura. After a long moment of silence, Pike concludes both are dead, and is about to order La'an to send a recovery team when Uhura's voice finally comes up, reporting they were both alright, much to the relief of the captain and the bridge crew; even Spock smiles a little to himself as he looks back to his console. La'an, however, looks grim, as Pike approaches her, thinking that was "quite a miracle". La'an wonders about "next time", knowing the Gorn had never come that far inside Federation space before. Pike is confident that next time, they would not be caught by surprise.

In sickbay, Una regains consciousness, finding herself connected intravenously to M'Benga; the doctor had given her his blood so she could live. In her quarters, La'an puts on the pin commemorating the Puget Sound and joins Pike, who is honoring his seven lost crewmen, their caskets draped with the flag of the Federation.

"Personal log, stardate 3177.9. Today, the Enterprise encountered the Gorn. Seven of the crew gave their lives. But... we survived."

Spock Amok

Season 1

Episode Number: 5

Season Episode: 5

Originally aired: Thursday June 02, 2022
Writer: Henry Alonso Myers, Robin Wasserman
Director: Rachel Leiterman
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokin (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: André Dae Kim (Chief Kyle), Graham Parkhurst (Lt. Dever), Gia Sandhu (T'Pring), Adrian Holmes (Robert April), Alden Adair (Barjan T'Or), Jennifer Hui (Ensign Christina), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer), Ron Kennell (Vasso), Tahirih Vejdani (K'Tyll), Carlisle J. Williams (Brax), Torri Webster (Ensign Zier), Yvette McKoy (Vulcan officiant)
Summary: A personal visit causes a comedy of errors during Spock & Pike's crucial negotiations with an unusual alien species.



On Vulcan, Spock arrives at the ritual site of his family for the koon-ut-kal-if-fee, where his betrothed T'Pring and a number of other Vulcans await. He takes the mallet and strikes the ritual gong, and the bell-ringers begin their ringing. The mistress of ceremonies beckons T'Pring forward, but as Spock approaches, T'Pring notes his ears. Spock now appears fully Human, with rounded ears, and is wearing his Starfleet uniform. T'Pring declares she will not marry a Human, and invokes the kal-if-fee, the ritual duel to the death. As two weapon-bearers come forward carrying lirpas,

Spock asks who he will fight. T'Pring points to another Vulcan in the crowd — Spock again, with fully Vulcan features. The human-appearing Spock protests that fighting oneself was illogical, but quickly takes up the lirpa as his Vulcan self slashes at him with it. The Vulcan Spock quickly disarms his Human self, and sneeringly asks what he would know of logic; he was only Human, ruled by emotion. The Human Spock looks fearful as the Vulcan Spock raises his lirpa for the killing blow...

...just as Spock awakens. He is in his quarters aboard the USS Enterprise, and he is alone. He goes to the mirror near his bed to confirm that his ears are still pointed, and feels them for himself just to be sure.

"Science officer's log, stardate 2341.4. After our harrowing encounter with the Gorn, Enterprise has returned to Starbase 1, one of the oldest, most venerated space stations in the Federation, newly repaired after the Klingon War. Here, the crew will be adjourning for some much-needed rest and relaxation. While I have agreed to assist the captain with a diplomatic matter, I plan to spend most of my time here with my fiancée T'Pring, who has arranged to join me since our last visit was cut short by..."

In the midst of his log entry, Spock is interrupted by the chime at his door. It is T'Pring, who greets him in the formal manner, "parted from me but never parted, never and always touching and touched", meeting at the appointed place. Spock gives the formal answer, before kissing her. T'Pring casts a critical eye around the room, saying that it looked very Human, and she found it hard to believe a Vulcan had slept there. Spock replies that these were his quarters, and he was in the process of redecorating. She withdraws her criticism until his redecorating is complete, and thanks him for arranging accommodations for her colleague K'Tyll. Spock hopes she finds them adequate, before asking T'Pring about her presence there. T'Pring asks if he knows about her professional responsibilities, and Spock recalls that she was engaged in rehabilitating people for their crimes by showing them the true path of Vulcan logic. T'Pring explains that one such person, Barjan Tor, has been reported in the area. Spock recalls that he had been responsible for the uprising on Kepler-22b; the Vulcan authorities had sought him for some time. Spock thinks that T'Pring has some work ahead of her, but she replies that this was the reason K'Tyll accompanied her. She reminds him that the last time they were together, it had been his duty that interrupted them, and believes they must prioritize their relationship. Spock agrees, but adds that he had some responsibilities to deal with beforehand. T'Pring, somewhat cold now, answers that she expected nothing less. He thinks her disappointed, but she says she is realistic. He assures her he will be free to dine with her that night.

In the conference room, Captain Pike, Spock, and Cadet Uhura are being briefed by Admiral April, who shows a map display highlighting the R'ongovian Protectorate, a "small but vitally important piece of territory" between the Klingon Empire and the Romulan Star Empire. It's the fastest route to the other side of the Beta Quadrant, but without safe passage, the Federation keeps losing ships there. Pike asks why there have been no inroads made with them before, and April replies that they have been "unusually private" up to that point; that changed after a diplomatic overture by the Tellarites. Pike, with a somewhat knowing look, asks how that went. The admiral looks mildly amused as he brings up the footage of a R'ongovian getting into Tellarite ambassador Q'Ral's face, saying that his beard was as ridiculous as his proposals, and that every word was an insult to R'ongovia. "Wow. And here I thought the Tellarites were rude," Pike observes. April muses that Q'Ral said the wrong thing, but they didn't have time to speculate. The R'ongovians had opened negotiations with the Klingons, and the Romulans were not far behind; time was not on their side. Pike is confident they can handle negotiations with more grace than the Tellarites — which is good, April notes, because they were meeting with the R'ongovian delegation the following day. The R'ongovian representative would be the one who had met with Q'Ral, Vasso L'Gaelia, captain of the R'ongovian flagship, which was docked to the station. Uhura recognizes the ship as a solar sailship, which April explains was brought out for ceremonial occasions; whenever the R'ongovians sign a treaty, they fly their new allies' flag in tribute.

Further discussion is interrupted by La'an, who reports a problem: The R'ongovian delegation has arrived already, and are demanding to speak to Pike immediately. Pike has her show them in, and their spokesman begins by saying they have been sitting and waiting on their ship while the Federation officers discuss the upcoming negotiations. April recognizes him as Captain Vasso. When the admiral identifies himself, Vasso bluntly states he will only speak to Captain Pike. The captain identifies himself, and tries to break the tension by saying if he had known the delegates were coming early, he would have cooked them up an Earth specialty. Vasso laughs, and appears glad to meet the captain, formally identifying himself and his first officer Brax. Pike introduces Spock, Uhura, and La'an, the latter of whom leaves to attend to the "security things". Brax sees Spock as a Vulcan, famous for logic, and believes he has a voice in the Federation's governance. Spock replies that all Federation members have a voice in its governance, something the R'ongovian finds "confusing", to which an amused Pike agrees. When Vasso asks how they determine who is in control, Pike explains that this is determined by a vote, an effort to listen to all their members' voices. The R'ongovians, too, are listeners, as empathy is a strong part of their society, something few people understand. Clapping Pike on the shoulder, Vasso chooses to get started with the negotiations.

Meanwhile, Lieutenant Ortega and Nurse Chapel arrive in sickbay, looking for Dr. M'Benga, telling him that they were ready to go for shore leave. While they are in casual clothes, the doctor is still in uniform, surprised that it was time already. He has been collecting data to share with his colleague Dr. Berroa, an expert in noninvasive surgical techniques, who has come all the way

from the other side of the quadrant to meet him. Meanwhile, Ortega asks about a Lieutenant Dever whom Chapel has been involved with, asking if she should keep a communicator open or rely on hand signals. Chapel replies there was no need; the thing she liked about Dever was how they were on the same page, the "casual, no attachments, this is just for fun, zero commitments" page, as she puts it. Ortega notes this was more of a book than a page, and reminds Chapel that she had said the same thing about a woman on Argelius II, something Chapel calls a misunderstanding, as it was only one time. Ortega corrects it to be "one very entertaining time", to which Chapel asks how being chased by live phaser fire could be fun. M'Benga steps out, fully packed and still in uniform, but with a hat adorned with fishing lures; M'Benga plans to go fly fishing, having heard the biospheres on the starbase had everything.

In the transporter room, Una and La'an are supervising the departing crew. Ortega tells La'an she didn't have to check them out in person, but La'an believes it was the only way to make sure it was done right, before remarking on M'Benga's "nice hat". M'Benga sighs and takes it off, before asking what La'an and Una had planned for shore leave. Ortega jokingly answers that they don't "shore leave", they "shore stay". M'Benga begins chuckling about "the nickname", but backtracks when he sees both Ortega and Chapel negatively shaking their heads, saying he didn't know what he was saying, and asks Chief Kyle to energize. Una pointedly asks about the nickname, but when the doctor hems and haws, Ortega admits that the yeomen often called Una "where fun goes to die"; she tries to pass it off with a joke, saying if they knew any better, they wouldn't be yeomen. Una brusquely orders Kyle to energize. After he does so, she asks if he has heard this, and he suspiciously denies it. A glance at La'an only earns a shake of the head.

Spock returns to his quarters, apologizing to T'Pol about the unexpected start of the negotiations. While she does not doubt his duty's importance, she reminds him they had agreed that this time would be for them, and that she had set aside important work of her own so they could meet. She believes that mutual sacrifice was crucial to a successful relationship, and Spock agrees it was indisputable. She worries that his Starfleet service makes him behave like a Human, and would make them incompatible. She tells him that perhaps he should prepare for his "important work", and brusquely leaves. Spock looks over to see the meal prepared, and bows his head.

In Starbase 1's lounge, Chapel is meeting with Lieutenant Dever. She thinks they don't have to stay and talk, and go and "have fun". Dever, however, seems to have something on his mind, wondering where their relationship was going. He wonders if she should transfer to his ship, the USS Skylark, or if he should transfer to the Enterprise. She suddenly sees Spock sitting in the lounge alone, and says abruptly that she needs to check on her friend and would speak to Dever later.

Back on the ship, La'an asks why Una allows the whole nickname business to bother her. Una denies that it bothered her; if anything, she was more bothered by the fact she never knew about it before. She asks if La'an did, and not only did the security chief not know, she didn't care, either. Una is concerned that her not knowing makes her feel "out of touch", given that as a senior officer she wasn't exactly part of the crew. La'an corrects her by saying that it wasn't because she was a senior officer, but that she terrified people, meaning it as a compliment. La'an sees no issue with liking work, and likes the quiet of the ship after the crew clears out for shore leave. Una admits she had been looking forward to redoing the duty roster, while La'an's choice of activity was checking the power supplies of the phasers in the armory. Suddenly, the computer alerts La'an to a security breach in airlock four. La'an acknowledges and asks who was on backup duty, but Una belays that, saying that she would be La'an's backup. "People are idiots," an incredulous La'an says. "You're fun." Una and La'an reach the airlock, phasers drawn. La'an opens the airlock, and inside they discover two people, a Human and a Bolian, wearing Starfleet environmental suits. They both raise their hands, the Human pleading for them not to shoot — they were Ensigns Christina and Zier, members of the crew.

In the lounge, Chapel is seated across from Spock, saying that she considers him a highly intelligent person, but at the same time she also felt he was an idiot. He had told T'Pol he would be "home in time for dinner", and then he wasn't. He admits he found himself in an impossible circumstance, but as he continues to explain, Chapel gives him a slap upside the head, which she explains is "designed to break old habits". She believes he should have put T'Pol over his duties, as a relationship was mutual sacrifice — which is, she admits, why she tries to avoid them. Spock admits his worry that T'Pol thinks him incompatible because he is

half-Human, and explains the dream he had the previous evening about his Human and Vulcan halves fighting each other. Being raised on Vulcan and among Vulcans, his Human ancestry was often used to isolate him. He had found a bond with his pet sehlat, I-Chaya; Chapel had a similar pet in her childhood, a malamute named Milo, who "may or may not" have bitten a girl who had called Chapel stupid. If his concern is that T'Pol is critical because he is half-Human, Chapel suggests that he show T'Pol that he understands her as a Vulcan. Spock thanks her for her advice, and offers the same if she needs it. "What are friends for?" Chapel replies. When Spock does not appear to understand the Human phrase, she explains it was a rhetorical question. But Spock replies that he knows, noting that Humans were just as easy to tease as Vulcans, earning a smile from Chapel.

In his quarters, Spock has suggested a "soul sharing" with T'Pol; it is clear that he does not understand her as well as he should. In this way, he would be privy to her innermost thoughts, and she to his. He asks if she consents, and she agrees. They kneel on cushions on the floor across from one another, speaking the ritual words in Vulcan, one of their hands reaching to the other in the traditional Vulcan display of affection, the other palm-to-palm. As their palms meet, all of the candles in the room go out. However, both immediately realize something is wrong, as T'Pol seems to call to herself, and Spock likewise to himself. They look at their reflections in the viewports looking to space, and realize they have switched bodies. T'Pol, in Spock's body, asks if it can be reversed; Spock, in T'Pol's, replies he does not know.

Pike is dressed for shore leave, the negotiations apparently successful, when he is visited by April; the admiral has bad news for him. The R'ongovians are cancelling further negotiations, saying that "a connection wasn't made", whatever that meant. Pike is honestly baffled by the revelation, remarking on how their meeting had gone. April agrees, saying if that was a bad diplomatic meeting, he wouldn't know what a good one would look like. Pike wants to get them back into a room to talk, but April stops him short, saying that the R'ongovians didn't want to talk to him anymore. A confused Pike asks who they did wish to speak to.

The body-swapped Spock and T'Pol have been working for hours with various meditations and chants to reverse their change of bodies, but to no avail. Spock-in-T'Pol has one more chant to try, which would require a gong. Just then, the door chimes. As these were Spock's quarters, it would have to appear that Spock is answering it. T'Pol-in-Spock thinks they will just go away eventually, but the best way for them to go away was for Spock to appear to answer it. T'Pol-in-Spock thinks it sounds like "hijinks" and dislikes the idea, which Spock-in-T'Pol concurs with, but in this case, "hijinks" would be the most logical course of action. T'Pol-in-Spock answers, revealing Captain Pike. He explains that the R'ongovians only want to meet with Spock. While T'Pol-in-Spock attempts to deflect the idea, Pike is adamant that Spock is now the only person who can keep the R'ongovians from allying with either the Klingons or the Romulans, or even both. Both realize they had to tell the truth, and explain to Pike that they had switched bodies and had no idea how to reverse it. At first disbelieving, Pike clearly understands the problem, but his is equally bad: The R'ongovians will not meet with anyone other than Spock... or at least, someone who looks like him. Spock-in-T'Pol does not wish to put her through that, but T'Pol-in-Spock agrees to do it, pointing out that the purpose of their efforts was to understand one another, and this seemed an opportune way to do so. Meanwhile, Spock-in-T'Pol would remain behind to try and reverse the ritual.

Meanwhile, Una and La'an arrive to interview the two ensigns they caught in the airlock. La'an quickly calls "bad cop", much to Una's chagrin; La'an smugly replies that she had to be quicker. La'an is seated across from Christina, asking if she knew what kind of trouble she was in. When Christina says she doesn't, La'an threateningly tells her to start talking, or the next time she did would be at her court martial. Meanwhile, Una is all smiles and understanding with Zier, saying she had been an ensign too once, and it was alright to be nervous. Zier says she didn't want to get into trouble, and Una assures her she wouldn't be, asking if she wanted coffee. Both ensigns admit — Christina crying, Zier laughing — that they were playing "Enterprise bingo", and were about to reach their last square, "sign the Scorch", when they were caught in the airlock. Afterwards, both ensigns are seated before both Una and La'an. Una has heard their explanations, but admonishes them for acting in an irresponsible manner ("very", La'an emphasizes). She is forced to revoke their shore leave and assigns them to micro-clean the transporter pads under the supervision of Chief Kyle, much to the horror of both ensigns, who consider the transporter chief "mean". After dismissing them, Una looks to La'an and asks incredulously, "What the hell

is 'Enterprise bingo?'" La'an has no better idea than she does.

Meanwhile, Spock-in-T'Pol receives a message. It is K'Tyler, who explains that the rendezvous with Barjan T'Pol has had an unexpected development. Barjan is refusing to meet with K'Tyler, and only wishes to meet with T'Pol. Spock-in-T'Pol tries to avoid it (rightly saying that T'Pol was not feeling like herself), but as Pike had been about the R'ongovians, K'Tyler is adamant: Only T'Pol can accomplish their mission.

Alone in the crew lounge, Una and La'an discover the origins of "Enterprise bingo", almost exclusively played by the ensigns and the enlisted crewmen. In order to achieve bingo, they must complete a series of tasks. La'an shows Una the list, which includes items such as setting the universal translator to the Andorian language, sitting in the captain's chair, and lastly, "sign the Scorch". La'an found the list in Zier's quarters during a "routine inspection". Una thinks that if this is what passes for fun, she is happy to be "fun's funeral" (to which La'an corrects her with "where fun goes to die"). Una confesses she doesn't understand it... so La'an suggests maybe they try to understand it, to get a better understanding of the crew.

They begin with the first item on the list, using the transporter to re-flavor chewing gum. In sickbay, La'an chews her gum until the flavor is gone, and Una activates the transporter. When La'an beams back in, the spearmint flavor is back in her gum. Next is the "turbolift two deck shout" challenge, where they call out their deck at the same time. La'an calls to the bridge, Una to engineering; the turbolift hears engineering. Next is the "phaser stun duel". They set their phasers to the lowest setting, but as they raise their weapons to aim and fire, Una suddenly says to wait, but La'an fires, hitting Una in the shoulder. A somewhat stricken-looking La'an asks if they were having fun yet.

Chapel and Ortega are walking through one of the biospheres, where the navigator asks about Chapel and Dever. Chapel did not tell him about her feelings, worried he would want to "get serious", and he had tried to read her some of his poetry, which she judges as "oddly, not terrible". They suddenly spot T'Pol, who Ortega notes looks "pissed". Chapel admits that she had tried to give Spock some relationship advice. Ortega warns about getting into the middle of a Vulcan relationship, as they would hit her with a *lirpa*; Ortega has actual scars from the Vulcan weapon to prove her point. T'Pol approaches and asks to speak with Chapel alone. A moment later, seated alone under a tree, Chapel is told what happened, and she can't help but laugh; she did not think Spock would have taken her advice that far. Spock-in-T'Pol confesses he had not taken the time to consider the feeling of being inside his fiancée's body, and notes it was "different". He is now concerned that he may endanger T'Pol's career, just as T'Pol in his body is working to save his, and wonders if there was a medical solution. Chapel thinks there may be, but it would take time; meanwhile, Spock now had a "relationship opportunity". Spock-in-T'Pol asks if that meant he should attempt to do T'Pol's job, and Chapel points out that T'Pol was doing his, so why not help her out and use some of that Vulcan logic she values? Spock-in-T'Pol sees this as coming "dangerously close to hijinks". "Hey, who doesn't love hijinks?" Chapel replies cheerfully.

Back aboard the ship, Una and La'an admit they were not feeling the allure that the rest of the crew did (though Una pointedly notes that she felt it when La'an shot her with a phaser), but Una insists on finishing the list. While it had been La'an's idea, she wondered how much more insight into the crew they needed. Una asks what the point of "Enterprise bingo" was. La'an thinks it a way to blow off steam, but Una believes it was meant as a way to break the rules.

The negotiations with the R'ongovians do not seem to be going well, as T'Pol-in-Spock points out the Klingon history of cultural domination, which Vasso dismisses as an inadequate reason to side with the Federation. Noting the formal, somewhat mechanical nature of the discussions, Pike — watching from the sidelines — wonders if the R'ongovians have suddenly gone "Vulcan-y"; April shushes him, as they were supposed to just be observers. T'Pol-in-Spock asks about the logic of allying with a culture whose central purpose was subjugating other cultures to its own, to which Vasso retorts by asking about the logic of allying with the Federation, whose interdependence dilutes the cultures that comprise it. Pike looks like he wants to intervene, but April assures him Spock can handle it. As a Vulcan, T'Pol-in-Spock sympathizes with the R'ongovians' fears that they would lose their culture to homogenization in a multilateral alliance like the Federation, and sometimes wishes to return to Vulcan rather than focus on Starfleet. Despite April's protests, Pike rises to speak, saying that he was not speaking on behalf of the Federation, but rather on behalf of Spock. Vasso elects to allow it. Pike calls Spock's decision to

serve in Starfleet a "noble sacrifice", spending so much time away from his home and culture. He compliments Spock's commitment to the Federation and to understanding the values and plights of wildly different cultures, even at great personal cost. Pike also finds his striving for intellectual excellence and his commitment to the spirit of duty inspirational. To answer Vasso's question about why they should ally with the Federation, Pike tells him to simply look across the table, and that he considered Spock to be everything that was great about Starfleet. He apologizes for interrupting, before quietly saying to T'Pring-in-Spock that he should never have put her in this position. Before leaving, Vasso expresses his admiration for Pike defending a member of his crew, and elects to conclude the meeting there, but will offer a summation before returning to R'ongovia. As April looks over at Pike, the captain is forced to shrug; he has no idea where it will go from there, either.

While most of the crew are enjoying themselves on leave (including M'Benga, now dressed for his fly fishing), Spock-in-T'Pring elects to bring Chapel along for the meeting with Barjan, who is seated at a three-dimensional chess table. Barjan emphasizes he only wished to meet with T'Pring along, but given that he was v'tosh ka'tur, Spock-in-T'Pring did not think he would object to a Human being along. Barjan wonders how El-Keshtanktil can employ Humans in the service of logic, finding T'Pring curious among Vulcans for her tolerance of these "creatures". Spock-in-T'Pring explains that T'Pring's sympathy for those without logic was why she was there, and given his position, she would have expected him to be open-minded. Barjan counters that while it was one thing to find strength in emotion, it was another to marry a half-Human, knowing that she was betrothed to the son of Sarek, noting how she defended Vulcan ideals on the one hand and insulted them with the other. As the son of Sarek was the one in T'Pring's body, her responses become increasingly heated, as do Chapel's, who remarks that she thinks Spock twice the Vulcan he is. Barjan dismisses the Human assessment. Attempting to "stay in character", Spock-in-T'Pring asks what circumstances would warrant bringing him in for rehabilitation. Barjan says at that point, there are none. He had come fully prepared to engage in rehabilitation, but seeing the company his captor keeps, he has changed his mind. Spock-in-T'Pring suddenly knocks him out with one punch, then remarks to Chapel that perhaps they should keep that part of how they captured Barjan under wraps, as Spock considers the response "a tad too Human". Chapel thinks it just the right amount.

Afterwards, Spock and T'Pring are in sickbay, where M'Benga is administering a salve of some sort onto Spock's forehead. He remarks that all the time he spent studying medicine on Vulcan, he never had to deal with a katric transfer, calling it "exceedingly rare". Chapel is monitoring their glucose levels as well as their cortical functions. T'Pring-in-Spock asks what the "noxious paste" M'Benga is applying. It was ground up Nivallan sea urchin, nutrient-rich and water-resistant, as well as being a good match for Vulcan skin, "electromagnetically speaking". Chapel notes he has been eager to try it out, and the doctor thinks it will become a Federation standard. Cortical stimulation will mimic the original brain patterns of the host body, making it uncomfortable for any "visitors" — or as Chapel puts it, "We zap you, you switch back." M'Benga adds "theoretically", saying that the katra bridged the gap between medicine and the mind, so it was not "cut-and-dry". Emotion also played a part, which is probably what caused the transfer in the first place. Chapel nervously asks M'Benga if they were going to get nerve pinched for this, and the doctor laughingly says they probably will. Both Spock and T'Pring begin screaming after the cortical stimulation begins.

Sometime later, Spock is conscious and back in his own body again. When he calls her "Nurse Chapel", she tells him he can call her "Christine". He does, and thanks her again for her help. Chapel thinks it "no big deal", but for Spock, it was "very big indeed". She suggests he try to be more careful with what he could and could not offer from then on, and he assures her not to worry, as Vulcans could not lie... at least, not like Humans could. She clarifies that he should be honest with himself. He is left to ponder this as she leaves.

In his quarters, Spock admits to T'Pring his fears that she did not see him as being Vulcan enough for her, that he was more concerned about his duty to Starfleet than his culture, or his betrothed. He confesses his feelings about Vulcan were not easy, as he had been forced to prove his Vulcan-ness, and any deviation was seen as proof he did not belong, whereas in Starfleet he was accepted for who he was, half-Vulcan, half-Human. "I am, quite simply, Spock," he concludes. T'Pring understands how much he values duty, and her fear was that he saw their relationship as just that, a duty, rather than something more. "We must both want to be here,"

she says, and Spock replies that he does, as does T'Pol. They seal their commitment with a kiss.

In the conference room on Starbase 1, Uhura asks if Pike knew what he was going to say to the R'ongovians, and April adds that he hopes so. Pike jokingly asks where the drama was in that, as the R'ongovians enter. Vasso begins by asking Pike why they should choose to ally with the Federation. To the surprise of both Vasso and April, Pike replies that they shouldn't, as they shouldn't risk making the Federation's enemies into their enemies as well. They were only a few years out from the Klingon War, and the Romulans were out there biding their time. "Who knows what species we'll piss off next?" he asks, adding that they weren't really coming to them with any great respect for R'ongovian culture, as they knew barely anything about it. He admits the Federation was only interested in the R'ongovians for their territory, and asks what the R'ongovians would gain in return — hypothetical trade markets, scientific advancement, support in the event of a crisis that would likely only come because they had cast their lot with the Federation? While it was true the Federation had a lot to offer, Pike knows it comes with a price, and the R'ongovians are right to suspect that price would be higher than they could pay. Vasso brusquely thanks him, and he and Brax leave. April asks Pike what he was doing, and Pike answers he is playing a hunch. The admiral is incredulous that Pike is risking an important strategic alliance over a hunch, but Pike points out that the R'ongovians had been rude to the Tellarites, reasonable with them, and deeply logical when talking with a Vulcan. Uhura asks if Pike thought they were simply copying who they came into contact with, and the captain confirms he had at first, but wonders if it was all a diplomatic technique. They responded positively when he spoke up for Spock, even though it violated their specific request that he not be involved. He thinks they were looking for someone to take their point of view, "radical empathy" as he puts it; they admire others' capacity to see things their way. They look out to see the solar sail on the R'ongovian flagship open up... and they are flying the flag of the Federation. The alliance is made.

Walking outside on the hull — without environment suits — Una and La'an have reached the end of their "Enterprise bingo". La'an worriedly asks Una if she was a hundred percent sure the force field will hold. Una taps the edge of the field, and jokes that she was ninety-nine percent sure at least. They reach "the Scorch" — the oldest unreplaced piece of the Enterprise's hull, where it was said to be good luck to sign it. La'an and Una affix their signatures to the Scorch, before looking up in awe to see the R'ongovian flagship flying overhead, sails deployed, and flying the flag of the Federation.

Lying in bed in Spock's quarters, T'Pol remarks that she enjoyed being "Mr. Spock" for a day, while Spock admits in the spirit of total honesty that he punched Barjan while in T'Pol's body. She concedes that having met Barjan, that was logical. As they settle in, the R'ongovian flagship flies by in view of the ship — and of the lounge on Starbase 1, where Ortega is sitting with Chapel. Ortega asks about Dever, and Chapel admits she told him how boring he was. Ortega suggests she try being so honest next time she was in a relationship. Chapel worries that this would mean the relationship would be "serious", to which Ortega wonders why that would be a problem. Chapel seems to have something on her mind, but says only "it would have to be the right guy".

Lift Us Where Suffering Cannot Reach

Season 1
Episode Number: 6
Season Episode: 6

Originally aired: Thursday June 09, 2022
Writer: Robin Wasserman, Bill Wolkoff
Director: Andi Armaghan
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokin (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Lindy Booth (Alora), Dan Jeannotte (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk), Sage Arrindell (Rukiya), Rong Fu (Lt. Jenna Mitchell), André Dae Kim (Chief Kyle), Adam Maros (Kier), Shawn Ahmed (Ensign Shankar), Avaah Blackwell (Linnarean Guard), Ian Ho (First Servant), Gia Sandhu (T'Pring), Shannon Widdis (Bridge Crew)
Summary: A threat to an idyllic planet reunites Captain Pike with the lost love of his life. To protect her and a scientific holy child from a conspiracy, Pike offers his help and is forced to face unresolved feelings of his past.



"Captain's log, stardate 1943.7. We have arrived at the Majalan system, a minor star cluster at the edge of Federation space. I was last here ten years ago, on a rescue mission. When a pulsar nearly kills you, you tend not to forget. Our mission today is a routine cartographic survey. I expect it will be a lot quieter."

As the USS Enterprise arrives in the Majalan system, Captain Pike is joined in the turbolift by Cadet Uhura, who appears to have trouble with her shoulder. She explains that she tended to get a little sore after combat training, and Pike remembers she has been on rotation with La'an that week. He mentions "lesson one" of security, that "a Rigelian tiger pounces without warning", something Uhura ruefully admits she learned that week. Pike knows La'an has a great deal to teach, but warns her to watch out for "lesson seven". Uhura worriedly asks about "lesson seven", and he makes a "lips are sealed" gesture as the turbolift arrives at the bridge. Uhura is immediately confronted by La'an, who curtly asks if she found her break "restful", before revealing "lesson two" of security, with help from Lieutenant Ortegas at the helm: "There are no breaks in security because threats never take breaks." Pike looks amused, knowing Uhura is in for it now, just as Una reports a distress call from a non-Federation shuttle, saying they were under attack. Spock's scans show the attacking vessel to be a small combat cruiser with light armaments, also with a non-Federation identification. Pike orders Ortegas to raise shields and bring them in closer.

In orbit of a nearby moon, the attacker disables the shuttle's engines and engages grapplers to reel the shuttle in, just as the Enterprise arrives on the scene. Pike orders Ensign Shankar at communications to hail the cruiser; when they do not reply, he orders an open channel. He

identifies himself and his ship, and warns that he is obliged by Federation law and his own conscience to intervene on behalf of a ship in distress, ordering the cruiser to stand down. The cruiser's response is to fire on the Enterprise, but with minimal damage, Lieutenant Mitchell reporting that shields were only down .02%. Pike orders red alert and evasive maneuvers. Uhura is at the tactical station under La'an's supervision, as Pike asks if they could disable the ship's weapons without "blowing her to smithereens". La'an instructs Uhura to charge the phasers at their lowest capacity. But the attacker changes course and fires again just as Uhura fires the phasers, resulting in severe damage to the attacker and causing it to spin out of control and crash onto the moon's surface. Shankar receives an urgent hail from the shuttle, requesting immediate evacuation; Spock reports the shuttle's life support is failing. Pike orders them beamed aboard, and leaves with Una to greet their guests.

Pike and Una arrive at the transporter room on deck six, just as Chief Kyle beams the shuttle passengers aboard. To Pike's surprise, the one to greet him, Alora, is familiar to him, though she greets him as "Lieutenant Pike". "You know her, captain?" Una asks, before jokingly adding, "Or should I call you lieutenant?"

As the other two passengers — an adult male and a young boy — get their bearings, Pike explains that he met Alora years ago. Alora recalls that he had saved her from a shuttle that time, too, leading Una to comment on her "bad luck with shuttles". Alora thinks it could be good luck, depending on how one looked at it. She notes how his uniform was "very yellow", and he explains it was actually gold, because he was the captain now. Alora formally thanks the captain on behalf of Majalis. Pike, now stammering, introduces Una, his Number One, who offers to escort them to the ready room for debrief. The male insists on going to their medical facility first, as the boy seems to have been injured. Pike asks if he was the boy's father, and the male coldly replies that it was strictly in a biological sense.

In his office in sickbay, Dr. M'Benga is reading from his storybook to his daughter Rukiya, who says he had read the exact same chapter twice in a row. He admits that because he's kept her in the pattern buffer of sickbay's transporter to keep her disease from progressing, and can't keep her out for very long, sometimes he loses track of the details. She asks how long he's been reading to her, and he admits it's been "a while". The transporter was on a timer, so as not to be disruptive. Just as Rukiya is asking when, the transporter takes her. M'Benga stares at the empty chair for a moment just as his door chimes; it is Nurse Chapel, telling him they had people with possible injuries coming. Composing himself, M'Benga rises to check on his patient.

Alora explains that the boy, known only as the "First Servant", was a holy figure chosen by lottery to embody the Majalan people's maxim: "science, service, sacrifice". He had forsworn his own family because all on Majalis were his family now. Pike still seems to be struggling with his feelings since seeing her again, before asking what they were doing on the moon they were orbiting. She explains that there was a retreat there for the First Servant's studies, and that she and Elder Gamal, the male with her on the shuttle, were taking the First Servant back to Majalis when the ship attacked them, demanding they surrender the child. La'an asks if they had any idea who the attackers were. Alora knows the nearest inhabited system is populated by descendants of a long-lost alien colony, but their worlds have co-existed peacefully for centuries. She suspects it was intended to be a ransom, as she was to oversee the First Servant's ascension to the throne in two days' time. If any outsiders knew of the sacred nature of the ceremony, they would also know that Majalis would pay any price for the child's safe return. La'an suggests sending a landing party to investigate the crashed ship, and Spock adds the attackers may have survived. Alora assures them no such investigation is necessary, but Una believes it not only necessary, but required. Alora then appeals directly to Pike, saying that her people did not join the Federation and could handle things themselves, pleading with him to let her people handle it. Pike, however, is bound by Starfleet regulations to investigate any ship that attacked a Starfleet vessel, and regretfully explains he will do so, with or without Alora's cooperation. Alora responds in kind, saying that she would accompany the landing party, with or without Pike's cooperation.

In sickbay, Chapel's scans show slight reduction in the cerebral blood flow, which M'Benga recognizes as being consistent with head trauma, jokingly admonishing the First Servant not to block the hull with his head next time it collapsed. As Chapel prepares to repair the damage with a subdermal scalpel, Gamal demands she keep that "butcher's knife" away from the First Servant, and instead asks for the medical scanner to check something for himself. He appears familiar with the technology, and is able to determine that the First Servant's quantum bio-

implants are functioning; the Majalans made use of quantum mechanics to heal injuries. He makes disparaging remarks about Starfleet's medical technology, and boasts that in his clinic, healing started at the subatomic level. Chapel is surprised to learn Gamal is a doctor, and the elder replies that he had been, until he became father to the First Servant, who was now his only patient. The First Servant examines the scanner, finding it "rudimentary" but interesting. M'Benga seems particularly interested about the Majalans' medical technology; if it did what Gamal said, that would make disease and suffering a thing of the past. Gamal explains they had a saying on Majalis: "Let the tree that grows from the roots of sacrifice lift us where suffering cannot reach." He adds that there was no disease of any kind among his people.

At the crash site of the attacking ship, La'an and Uhura cut their way inside; Uhura's scans show no life readings. As Uhura spots a still-working console and moves to touch it, La'an tells her she just flunked "lesson three" of security: "Let your tricorder do the investigating." She explains that some Klingon ships were equipped with a scuttle system, where even the lightest touch would trigger the ship's auto-destruct sequencer. Uhura runs her scans, saying that there was no chance they would blow up that day; the attackers wiped the data banks. La'an warns her that "luck runs out fast", and admonishes her to be more careful, before reporting to Spock that the crash site was secure. Alora steps inside, with Spock behind her; she recognizes the ship's technology as being consistent with the nearby colony. Spock finds a device that does not seem to be connected to the ship's systems, but Alora does not recognize it. She does, however, recognize a small token she finds on the deck...

Back aboard the Enterprise, Alora explains that the token is an oath coin, the highest military honor on Majalis, given to the Linnarean Guards when they swear the oath to protect the life of the First Servant. The other side of the coin has been defaced, a forbidden act. She has to now consider the possibility that one of the guards has betrayed his oath and is conspiring with the alien colony to kidnap the First Servant. The boy's life was in danger, as was Alora's. Pike offers to keep them on the Enterprise as long as they needed, but Alora had her duties on Majalis; the peaceful transition of power was a cornerstone of their society. When he offers armed escorts, she replies that hers were a private people, and foreign representatives were not welcome. "What about a friend?" Pike asks after a moment. "You can have friends, right?"

In the Majalan capital, a city floating over the surface of the planet, Alora's aide explains her schedule, involving an opening speech, a tree planting, and the Festival of Gratitude. Pike can now see why Alora could not stay away. Alora adds one more item to the agenda, and asks for the Linnarean Guards to be summoned. "Ready to shake the tree and see what falls out?" Pike asks, and Alora replies she is. As she moves ahead, Pike unsnaps the holster on his phaser, ready to draw at a moment's notice.

In sickbay, Spock approaches Elder Gamal and asks for a word in private, and asks if he recognizes the device he found on the crashed ship. Gamal replies he does not. Spock explains his analysis shows it to be a form of neural dampener, and based on its size, it was intended for use on the First Servant. Overhearing, the First Servant asks to see it, and Gamal hurriedly puts it back in the box, saying he would rather the boy not see it. The First Servant realizes Spock is the science officer, and asks if he knew the propagation of subspace radio signals in long-range communications. Spock glances with reserved surprise at Gamal, before answering that he understood it to be roughly fifty-two thousand times the speed of light, something the First Servant calls "super slow". He can see why the Federation had to rely on subspace relays, as the signals would degrade before they were received, even if subjected to radial polarization. Spock admits he does not know many at that age who were familiar with radial polarization, and the First Servant explains he was interested because he thought it would be fun to have a friend to talk to at long distance. He had designed his own subspace frequency, and thought he could rewire the biobed to generate it. Spock concedes it would be an impressive feat, though Dr. M'Benga would object to using his equipment. Gamal intervenes, saying the First Servant needed his rest, as he had a big day coming.

On the surface, Alora addresses the Linnarean Guards, reminding them that it was the eve of the First Servant's ascension to the throne, and at that sacred time, it was important to remind themselves of the sanctity of their calling, and so asks for them to renew their vows and present their oath coins. The guards kneel, holding the oath coins they wear on chains around their necks for her inspection. Coming to one of the guards, Kier, she sees the casing on his coin is damaged, which he calls "an accident". She asks to take a closer look. Seeing Pike staring intently

at him, Kier pushes Alora aside, and uses his weapon to vaporize one of the other guards trying to stop him before fleeing. The other guards fire at him; as Pike prepares to follow them, Alora takes him a different way. The guards pursue Kier into the gardens, and he is able to fight them off with relative ease. As he seems to escape his pursuers, however, he is tackled by Pike, who has cut ahead of him. As both rise, Kier moving to regain his weapon, Pike is faster and draws his phaser, warning that it was not on stun. Alora steps between Pike and the other guards, saying she only wished to talk. Kier raises his hands in a submissive gesture, and Alora asks why he had been aboard the ship. He replies that he was there to fulfill this oath, and renounce everything this "floating hell" stood for. He draws a knife and holds it to Alora's throat. "Long live the First Servant!" he proclaims, just as Alora elbows him and tackles him to the ground, stabbing him with his own blade.

In the recreation room back on the ship, Uhura is wolfing down her food while looking at a PADD when she is approached by Lieutenant Kirk, who reminds her to chew her food. Word had got around that he was on rotation with La'an, and suggests telling the security chief that she deserved a full hour for her food break — just as La'an approaches, saying he could tell her himself. Kirk backtracks by saying that he would, but he was conflict-averse, and quietly retreats. La'an has a crate full of data chips she "liberated" from the crash site; while she knows it was against protocol, she cites "lesson six": "Know when to bend the rules." She knows Starfleet would not have approved, so she couldn't put them through the ship's translator, and it would have taken weeks anyway. She knows Uhura has a talent for languages, and so leaves her with the task — much to the cadet's chagrin.

In sickbay, M'Benga is astonished to see that the First Servant's injuries have healed so completely, it was like he had never experienced head trauma at all. He is inspired to ask Gamal a "hypothetical" question, doctor to doctor. He explains that he had an eleven-year-old female patient with mast cell cygnokemia, and asks if the quantum bio-implants could treat it in late stages. Gamal answers that it could in fact be reversed. M'Benga then asks if he had such a patient (and he does), could he send her to Majalis? Gamal, however, says that Majalan law prohibits sharing their technology with unaffiliated races, pointing out that the Federation had similar policies. M'Benga replies that this did not apply to medical interventions. Gamal concedes that one day, an alliance between Majalis and the Federation would serve them all.

Back in the Majalan capital, Pike asks Alora if she should see a doctor. She assures him (using his first name) that she was fine, but is shaken by the encounter. She had thought she had known Kier and thought him loyal, and begins to wonder if there were others like him that she thought she knew. Pike again offers an armed guard outside the door. She declines, but Pike reminds her that he didn't save her from a pulsar just to let her get killed. She amends that by saying he could come in with her instead, as she kisses him.

In bed later that evening, Pike confesses that he "may have" been hitting on Alora the first time they met, and she laughs that he absolutely had been. He calls it "crazy" that they met again, and she agrees that it did seem "unlikely", but both thought about the other now and again. Pike jokes that he always wondered what happened to "that Majalan girl who couldn't fly a shuttle". She corrects him by saying she did know how to fly it, but just flew it into the wrong place. Pike had the feeling that they recognized something in one another, and thought it was a shame they never got to follow through with it. Alora admits she had not been expecting them to reconnect again, but it was rare to know what lay in the future. Pike agrees, though adds that some people get a glimpse of their future; he reveals to her that there will be an accident in less than ten years that will "not end well" for him, and that Federation medicine would not be able to help him. She asks how he knows, and he replies simply that he does, without elaborating. Alora knows that Majalan medical technology could help, but that would mean he would have to stay among them, and live as they did. She apologizes for overstepping, but he assures her that she didn't. She promises he would be welcome on Majalis, calling it "another part of the future" to consider.

Uhura calls La'an to her cabin and reveals she has found the "needle in the haystack" La'an asked her to find, having translated the dialects from the alien data chips. Reading the results, La'an realizes they had to take the information to the captain. Uhura wishes her luck and asks to know what they find, but La'an tells her that it was her work, and she should present it... if she was sure of her findings, that is. Uhura is confident that she is.

In sickbay, M'Benga is bringing a tray of food to his office when he hears the sound of laughter,

and enters to find the First Servant projecting a game similar to hopscotch on the floor — and Rukiya jumping through the circles projected. The First Servant apologizes, saying he used noble gases from the atmospheric processor to project them, thinking they would be safe. M'Benga lifts Rukiya back onto her exam chair, worried about her standing, and she ruefully says she was having fun. M'Benga looks at the First Servant and asks how he found out about Rukiya. He replies that the doctor and Elder Gamal "talk loud", and when he couldn't find anyone with cygnokemia in sickbay, he looked in the places he would try to hide in. Rukiya asks if she had to go back in, and her father says she does... but perhaps not for much longer. As he places her back in the pattern buffer, M'Benga tells the First Servant that no one can know about her. Just then, Gamal enters, having heard noises. The First Servant claims he was looking for a "midnight snack", but Gamal thinks he had been showing off, and it was time for him to go.

Pike returns to the ship, annoyed at having to be called to hear a "very urgent report" in person. Una explains that it was probably best that he find out without Alora hearing. Uhura presents her report, explaining that she had traced the language of the kidnappers to a non-Federation colony, Prospect VII, a class L world a couple of light years away. It was a barren world, barely above subsistence levels. Pike is aware, having learned this from Alora, but Uhura reveals her surprise: the dialect spoken was linguistically similar to that of the Majalans, which meant the "alien" colony was in fact an offshoot off Majalis. La'an asks why anyone would leave "paradise" to settle on Prospect VII, and Spock adds that if the colony was in fact Majalan, why would Alora and Gamal tell them otherwise? Pike knows the Majalans did not trust outsiders; saving Alora from the pulsar had led to an overture to join the Federation. He is convinced that there had to be a reasonable explanation, just as M'Benga calls from sickbay: Gamal and the First Servant are trying to leave the ship.

Pike rushes to the transporter room, where Kyle is refusing to beam them down. Gamal demands that Pike order his transporter chief to do so. Pike thought they had agreed they were safer on the ship, but Gamal does not agree. Suddenly, both Gamal and the First Servant are beamed off the ship. Kyle insists he didn't do it, and someone had locked onto their signal while the shields were down. Pike calls the bridge, asking if there were any ships nearby. Una reports one, another combat cruiser trying to flee. Suddenly, Gamal is returned to the ship alone, and asks where the First Servant is. Pike orders red alert.

On the bridge, Spock reports the First Servant's life signs aboard the ship, and they are unable to beam him back with the cruiser's shields raised. Shankar reports he has hailed several times, with no response; Ortegaz plans to remind them the Enterprise was bigger. Pike orders Mitchell to secure the cruiser in a tractor beam to prevent them from going to warp, but the cruiser attempts to do so anyway. Mitchell is forced to increase power to the structural integrity field, and Spock warns that if they still try to go to warp, it could destroy the cruiser. Pike is unwilling to risk harming the First Servant or the kidnappers, and orders the tractor beam disengaged. Mitchell does so, but it is too late; the strain causes the cruiser to explode.

Alora is horrified when Pike informs her of the loss of the cruiser and the First Servant. She thinks this means their world is "over"; if the First Servant does not ascend, Majalis would "fall from the sky", the floating city crashing into the rivers of lava and lakes of acid on the surface below. When a confused Pike asks how one child could prevent such a calamity, Alora abruptly cuts off the communication. Pike then turns to his crew and demands to know how someone could have beamed the First Servant off his ship. After a momentary silence, Uhura speaks up and says she knows... and glances pointedly at Gamal.

In the ready room, Gamal calls Uhura "deluded", and La'an defends her, saying she was summarizing facts and drawing the logical conclusion. Pike asks Uhura to walk him through it. Uhura explains that one would need full bio-patterns to beam someone off without their knowledge, which would have been collected in sickbay; Gamal had accessed those bio-patterns just before attempting to leave the ship. Gamal protests by saying he was the First Servant's doctor, but Uhura points out that he accessed not only the First Servant's patterns, but his own. La'an adds that the cadet just demonstrated the dreaded "lesson seven" of security: "Leave no stone unturned." La'an usually requires people to look under Mugatan breathing stones for that lesson, but considers that unnecessary in this case (much to Uhura's relief). As Pike asks Gamal for the full story, Spock calls and asks Pike to join him on deck seventeen, as he has discovered something the captain needs to see. Pike acknowledges, and orders La'an to escort the elder to the brig.

Spock compliments the First Servant's ingenuity, explaining that he had devised a method of generating his own subspace channel on an unused frequency; Spock thought there might be some utility in monitoring it. Spock reveals that the First Servant had sent a distress signal, something Pike knows is impossible, as no one on the combat cruiser could have survived. But Spock thinks the First Servant was not on the cruiser when it exploded, and in fact he had been transported to where the signal originated — right there on the Enterprise. Inside one of the cargo crates on the deck, they find the First Servant, alive and well. Pike prepares to take him to sickbay, but the First Servant insists he must go to Majalis for the ascension. Pike calls to the bridge to inform Alora that they had news she'd want to hear.

On Majalis, the ascension ceremony is in full swing, as cheering crowds greet the First Servant. Pike stands with Alora, witnessing it... but he has some pointed questions. Like, for instance, how the fate of Majalis rested on the head of one child, which Alora says was "complicated" and "sacrosanct"; why Gamal would kidnap his own son... or why she never mentioned that Prospect VII was not an alien colony, but a colony of her own people. Alora looks distinctly uncomfortable.

In the Enterprise's brig, Gamal is approached by Una, and demands to be released as he was not a Federation citizen. Una points out that he broke several Federation laws by modifying the transporters to kidnap a minor, whom he then hid on the ship. Gamal insists he did so for his son's safety, and admits that the neural dampener found on the crashed cruiser was also intended for that purpose, to make him unable to fulfill his duties as the First Servant. He wishes to speak to Pike, but the captain was on Majalis with the First Servant. Gamal looks stricken at this, asking if the ceremony had begun, and Una thinks that it had by that point. Gamal admits he deserves to be there, as he had violated his own beliefs, as well as his planetary law, to try and save his son. Una asks him from what.

The First Servant proceeds through the crowd to the "Sacred Chamber"; Alora explains the Majalan Ruling Council has allowed an exception for Pike, though an outsider, to witness the ascension ceremony because he saved the boy's life, and because she wanted him to be a part of it. When Pike asks what he was to be part of, the First Servant approaches, inviting Pike to join him at the ascension.

Back on the ship, Shankar reports he is unable to reach the captain, as the planet was putting out an electromagnetic field that blocked communications. Una orders Spock to prepare a landing party to beam to the surface, but Spock reports that the same EM pulse that blocked communications would also block transporters. Una is incredulous that they were unable to reach the captain at the exact moment they needed to.

Inside the Sacred Chamber, Pike stands in the background as they approach the throne, attached to a number of power generators within. Alora kneels before the First Servant, saying asking the ritual question: "Do you freely offer this gift of self to the people of Majalis?" "With joy and gratitude, I do," the boy replies. "Do you freely choose your fate?" she asks next. Just as he is about to give the ritual answer, the First Servant sees the bundle being carried on a stretcher by the Linnarean Guards, and falters. Two of the guards hold their weapons to bar Pike's approach, but Alora tells them he could see. To Pike's horror, it is a child: the previous First Servant, now a wasted, lifeless husk. The guards hold him back to prevent him from interfering, as Alora says he has sacrificed himself willingly for the people of Majalis. Pike is able to overpower the guards holding him, but one standing near the throne (which now holds the First Servant locked in, cables connecting to his head) strikes him across the face with her weapon, and he loses consciousness with Alora looking down on him.

Pike comes to inside Alora's residence, and rises to leave. The guards bar his way, but Alora assures them the ascension is complete, and that they may go. She tells Pike he may go now as well, and he fully intends to do so — to rescue the First Servant from the machine. Alora stops him by saying even if he could get inside the chamber, severing the connection would kill the boy. Pike is dumbfounded, asking why they would need a child to plug into a machine to keep Majalis running. Alora admits she is not sure why, or what it will do to him; the founders set it up that way centuries ago, and they had tried to find alternatives for just as long; it had in fact been what Alora was working on when they met ten years before. Pike asks if the First Servant will suffer, and Alora quietly confirms he will, and that they did not pretend otherwise. Pike is disgusted at the idea that the entire Majalan civilization is founded on the suffering of a child. Alora pointedly asks if children did not live in poverty or squalor in the Federation, while those

who lived in abundance looked away; the difference was, the Majalans did not look away, and their suffering was carried on the back of only one. Pike fully intends to report to Starfleet the first chance he gets, but Alora reminds him they were not part of the Federation, and they had no jurisdiction. Perhaps in the future, she believes, he will feel differently. Pike's answer is a brusque call to the ship to beam him aboard, leaving Alora in tears.

In sickbay, M'Benga is approached by Gamal, who has requested a transfer to Prospect VII. The elder had once thought they were a planet of traitors, committed to destroying the Majalan way of life, but they had tried to help him save his child... and he had failed. He was adamant he would not fail the next child, and so has come to M'Benga to offer his help, one doctor to another, with the "hypothetical" patient with cygnokemia. He warns it would not be a cure, but M'Benga thinks it could be the first step to one. The doctor brings up Rukiya's medical file for Gamal to examine.

In his quarters, Pike has poured himself a drink as he stares out the viewport at Majalis, expression haunted.

The Serene Squall

Season 1
Episode Number: 7
Season Episode: 7

Originally aired: Thursday June 16, 2022
Writer: Beau DeMayo, Sarah Tarkoff
Director: Sydney Freeland
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokin (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Jesse James Keitel (Dr. Aspen), Gia Sandhu (T'Pring), Shawn Ahmed (Ensign Shankar), Michael Hough (Remy), Phi Huynh (Pirate #1), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer (voice)), Shannon Widdis (Bridge Crew), Roderick McNeil (Stonn), Sophia Walker (Fran)
Summary: While on a dangerous humanitarian mission, the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise stumbles into a harrowing game of leverage with the quadrant's deadliest space pirate.



"Personal log, stardate 1997.9. My last few weeks of service at the Ankeshtan K'til Retreat have been productive. It is difficult to guide those who once walked a destructive path back to civilized society. Helping them purge the emotions that led to thievery, abuse, even murder. Most challenging has been stealing time for Spock and myself. We are making the most of our long-distance endeavor, but I sense in Spock a

desire to explore his Human side. So I've been attempting to introduce experimentation into our relationship in an effort to — as Humans are apparently fond of saying — 'spice things up'."

At the Ankeshtan K'til Retreat, a Vulcan criminal rehabilitation center on the third moon of Omicron Lyrae, T'Pring observes the efforts of the people trying to return to logical society, engaging in meditation, art, and making patterns in the sand. Later, while she has some time alone, she contacts her fiancé Spock aboard the USS Enterprise, where she says outright that she has been conducting research on Human sex, which causes Spock to momentarily choke on the wine he is drinking in some surprise. T'Pring explains that she has found some books on the topic, such as *Tropic of Cancer* by Henry Miller, which has a specific idea about sexuality that she finds "very male"; *Fear of Flying* by Erica Jong, which has a female point of view; and *The Argonauts* by Maggie Nelson, which she found "more interesting". Spock, who is unfamiliar with these books, cuts her off after a moment, saying that perhaps they should consult these texts together. T'Pring agrees, if that was what he wished, but thought that as a full Vulcan, the onus was on her to understand Spock's Human half, essentially what made him who he was. He is

taken aback by this for a moment, and thanks her for the thoughtful gesture, though concedes it was no substitute for seeing her in person.

Walking through the ship, Nurse Chapel explains about their guest, Dr. Aspen, who seems "very sharp"; when it appears Spock is not paying attention, Chapel adds that they have blades for hands, for shaving, which a half-listening Spock finds "most curious". She finally stops to get his attention, and he apologizes, as he is distracted. Chapel adds he is also a master of understatement. Spock admits he is having challenges with T'Pol. Chapel is wary, given that the last time she gave him relationship advice, he "went overboard", but Spock promises not to do so again, admitting that he needed a friend. He mentions T'Pol's research into Human sexuality, and believes she is far more interested in exploring his Human side than he is; reconciling his divergent cultures of origin is complex. Chapel tells him that it was fun to be friends with Vulcans because they were honest, and urges him not to be "smarter than the truth", as that was what got him into trouble last time. As they resume walking, she gives him a "pro tip" to pay better attention while she was talking "because..." ending with a question. "Because you are completely charming and I am missing it?" Spock answers, which Chapel cheerfully calls "progress".

In Captain Pike's quarters, the captain is serving a meal for Dr. Aspen and several other members of the crew — Spock, Chapel, Una, and Dr. M'Benga — as the doctor is explaining their involvement in running aid missions in that particular sector of space. They have encountered a group of colonists stranded on the edge of non-Federation space for several months. The colony ships lost power twenty-six days earlier; the colonists were toughing it out, but malnourishment and dehydration were setting in, and their location left them a long way from any help. Pike is confident that they would have their "new friends" back on their feet in no time. Aspen is grateful, and remarks that they can see why Starfleet called him their "Boy Scout". Pike protests at the idea, but Una tells him it was actually in his Starfleet file. Aspen is also glad that Starfleet was able to send a ship out that far, as they never relished the idea before. Pike is aware that the sector is akin to the Wild West, and asks for a risk assessment. Una brings up reports of an "unaffiliated" vessel, the *Serene Squall*, which raids along the border. Aspen explains the *Squall* was a pirate vessel, which has destroyed a number of their aid missions. Spock believes the *Enterprise* would be superior to any pirate vessel, but Aspen warns that the pirates were outsiders who were fiercely loyal to one another, a bond more powerful than any weapon. Pike asks the doctor about their prior experience as a counselor on Starbase 12, and why they changed to humanitarian efforts. Aspen replies that their experience on the border showed them that not everyone who needed help was lucky enough to be in the Federation, so left to run aid missions themselves. Pike considers that a shame, as he felt Starfleet needed more people with their perspective. Just then, La'an calls Pike from the bridge — they had arrived at the location of the colonial ships, and he would want to see what they'd found.

The colony ships appear to have been completely destroyed, their debris scattered across space. La'an reports signs of two of the three ships, and Ortegas detects no life signs. Aspen wonders if the survivors escaped to the remaining ship. Spock is finding no sign of it, but is detecting an unidentified warp signature, which Pike suspects might have been the pirates. Aspen doesn't believe the colonists had anything worth stealing, but La'an brings up the possibility that they were after the colonists themselves, as slavery was "upsettingly common" outside of Federation space. Pike sees the problem: if La'an is right (and he hopes she's not), the pirates may have already retreated across the border. Spock points out that entering non-Federation space required approval from Starfleet Command, and a request from their current position would take two days, as they were too far from the Federation subspace relay network to provide rapid communication. "To put it simply, if we head in, we would be on our own," he warns. Pike has him send the request, and orders Ortegas to plot a course, and to drop subspace buoys to maintain communication. The captain is well aware the buoys would be their only connection to civilization, but he is not willing to wait to keep people from the auction block, and promises Aspen he will find the colonists.

Spock approaches Aspen's quarters to find loud, lively music playing inside. With a quirked eyebrow, he presses the door chime, and is greeted by the counselor. He informs them that Pike has requested their presence on the bridge. In the turbolift, Aspen explains they used to "club hop" during their days at Starfleet Academy to work out stress. Spock agrees that the current situation would induce anxiety, and Aspen adds a bit of guilt as well, believing they should have arrived sooner. Spock considers self-blame to be counterproductive, and also induces the

anxiety they're trying to avoid. Aspen retorts that not all of them have undergone Kolinahr to purge emotion. Their familiarity with the Vulcan ritual surprises Spock, and Aspen explains they had worked with Vulcans before. Aspen admits to never really understanding the point of Kolinahr; Vulcans naturally had emotions, so why try to erase them? Spock believes Kolinahr offered clarity, the ability to see oneself without bias, and admits to looking forward to his.

As they arrive on the bridge, Pike explains that a distress call had been detected in an asteroid field, asking if the colonists had the ability to send one, even without their ships. Aspen concedes it would be possible, but also warns that pirates have set ambushes by cloning ship signals. Spock had mentioned that very possibility to the captain, who reminded him that Starfleet regulations required them to investigate any distress signal. Pike orders yellow alert and has Ortega bring them in closer. The navigator cheerfully asks how close, "first date or third date". "Blind date," Pike answers, which Ortega takes to mean "proceed with caution". As they approach, Spock reports the signal growing stronger, but has yet to detect a ship of any kind. Just as the Enterprise bumps into one of the larger asteroids, an energy net activates around the ship. Pike orders red alert and full stop. Spock reports the net is formed from multiple asteroids equipped with high-energy electromagnetic reflectors, and recommends they do not cross one of the beams. In the best-case scenario, the energy beam would disable the ship; at worst, "kaboom", as Ortega puts it. La'an asks about weapons, and Spock considers it unwise to attempt to disable the net; if one went down, it could trigger a cascade effect of detonations, which could also destroy the ship. Una suggests trying to push them to make a space, but Spock warns it could trigger the same cascade. The net appears to be shrinking in on them. Looking at the readings, Aspen sees a potential solution — if each asteroid had a reflector, that meant the further they were from the source, the signal would degrade, and whichever of the asteroids is emitting the highest amount of energy was likely the source of the beams. Spock scans the electromagnetic signatures of the asteroids, and appears to find one with the highest... then shortly afterward, a second. Pike asks which one to shoot. Spock replies he cannot determine that with certainty, but Pike urges him to "go with his gut"; if they didn't fire on one, the net's contraction would prevent them from firing on any. Aspen urges him to make a choice, and after a moment, he finally does. It proves to be the right one, disabling the entire net.

As the Enterprise proceeds, a small craft anchored on one of the asteroids detaches and begins to follow. Meanwhile, Spock is in his quarters, consulting the computer readings of the asteroid field, when Aspen comes down. When he asks how he could help them, they reply that they had come to ask him that question. Spock invites them to help with his scans of the asteroid field to figure out the Serene Squall's tactics, but Aspen points out that when Pike told him to "go with his gut", they believed Spock had looked like he was about to have a heart attack. From their long service together, Spock knows Pike is comfortable with hunches, but to Spock it felt uncomfortably like guessing. He considers guesses to be derived from incomplete premises, and he (and all Vulcans) consider that illogical. Aspen points out his Human ancestry, but Spock dismisses that as "merely genetics", as he was born and raised on Vulcan, which Aspen similarly dismisses as geography. They explain that all species put things into "boxes" — people were either "this" or "that". Sometimes people acted to other people's expectations, but that was not necessarily who they were as a person. Spock thinks they are suggesting he try to balance his Human and Vulcan natures, but they reply that perhaps he was neither, something Spock considers nonsensical: "If I am not Human or Vulcan, what am I?" Aspen replies that it was not their question to answer, before apologizing for crossing boundaries, saying they had worked with a few Vulcans before. They then tell him not to waste his time with the asteroid field, as the trap had not been set by the Serene Squall; if it had, they would be dead already.

On the bridge, Ortega continues to navigate through the asteroid field. Pike knows it was not easy without mapping relays, offering to let Ensign Hsu take over if needed, but Ortega is fine with steering manually, as it felt like she and the ship were in "deep conversation", like a third date, earning a chuckle from the captain. The Enterprise then arrives at the location of another ship, which La'an identifies as the third colonial ship. Spock detects two hundred lifesigns sealed in the cargo hold, and thirty more through the ship; Aspen recalls the three ships each had a compliment of about two hundred. Una speculates the Squall hijacked the ship and left a boarding party aboard to keep their prisoners. Pike asks if the ship had detected them, and La'an reports they have not; the Enterprise was still out of their range. Pike decides to use the element of surprise while they still had it, and has Una and La'an accompany him to the

transporter room.

La'an and the landing party are suited up in tactical gear, and a moment later, Pike enters, similarly attired. Una points out how he seemed to be playing "fast and loose" with the rules that day, entering non-Federation space and heading up away missions. "Who, me? The Boy Scout?" Pike jokes, as he steps onto the transporter pad, and tells La'an to watch her six. Una beams them into the cargo bay, where they fan out to search for the colonists. They discover cages, with a device that appeared to be giving off false readings. Pike calls the ship and reports no colonists. Una immediately prepares to bring the landing party back, but the signal is soon lost; Ensign Shankar at communications reports comms were jammed. Below decks, Chapel suddenly hears shouting, followed by weapons fire, and she immediately climbs into a Jefferies tube. Spock reports multiple transport signals detected the moment they beamed the landing party onto the colony ship, and several of them are on their way up to the bridge. Una orders battle stations, and instructs the computer to initiate security protocol Omega-Beta-Nine, locking down the ship's systems. One of the pirates tosses a flashbang grenade from the turbolift. Una and Ortegas immediately draw phasers (concealed under the captain's chair and the helm) and engage the pirates, while Spock protects Aspen by engaging in hand-to-hand with them, disabling some with a Vulcan neck pinch. Both Una and Ortegas take glancing hits, while Aspen takes a shot to the shoulder knocking Spock out of the line of fire and into the turbolift. Spock has the turbolift take them to deck four, shooting one of the pirates with a recovered weapon as the turbolift closes.

Aboard the ship, Pike and the landing party are immediately surrounded by the pirate crew. Their leader, a hulking, wild-haired Orion named Remy, looks highly amused as he approaches Pike, looking over his gear and patting the captain on the cheek. "Welcome to the Serene Squall," he says, chuckling.

Armed, Spock walks ahead of Aspen, guiding them to sickbay. The pirates have rounded up the bridge crew and are taking them to the transporter room. Una sees Spock and gives a slight shake of her head as she is taken away. Aspen warns they would get caught if they didn't find a place to hide, and Spock guides them up into a Jefferies tube.

Aboard the Squall, Pike is being interrogated by Remy and the crew, who are attempting to gain the access codes to disable the ship's lockdown. He finds Pike's "defiant captain drama" to be "sad", given that the Squall has seized the Enterprise and caged the crew. The female pirate standing behind him says they were wasting their time. "So she's the smart one," Pike says sarcastically. Remy is amused. "Handsome and witty. Aren't you a charmer?" he says, as he tosses a bowl of a concoction Pike finds foul into his face, asking if they actually ate it. Remy explains it was an Orion specialty, and the crew loved it; the three crew around him look somewhat noncommittal to that idea. Pike offers to show them what "real food" tasted like if the pirates saw that his crew got their own food and water, offering to discuss the command codes over dinner. Remy is not buying it, threatening to airlock the crew if he didn't give them what they wanted. The female pirate again speaks up, mentioning that they were far from Federation space, and the Enterprise wasn't going anywhere; besides, she adds, they could use a good meal. Remy asks what was wrong with his cooking, before finally agreeing to "pamper" the Enterprise crew, adding that he hoped Pike could cook, as his crew's lives depended on it. Pike looks up at his captors, and asks to be taken to the ship's kitchen.

Back on the Enterprise, Chapel makes her way out of the Jefferies tube and accesses a computer terminal, trying to send a distress call, but the communications are offline due to the lockdown. She is then caught by two of the pirates, and she pleads with them not to hurt her, as she was just a nurse. One of them tells her to drop her weapons, but she replies she doesn't have any. However, she does have a hypospray in her sleeve. As one of them approaches, she uses the hypo to incapacitate him, then tackles the other before he can shoot. The other pirate scrambles for his weapon while Chapel goes for the hypo; she is faster, and is able to knock out the second pirate. She scurries back into hiding when she hears a door open, heralding others.

Pike is serving his own concoction to the crew, who seems to enjoy it. Remy judges it "edible", and Pike points out the rest of the crew seemed to like it. He thinks it wouldn't hurt for enemies to give each other compliments, and takes Remy for example — he seems too intelligent to take much lip from his crew. Remy is confident they know who's in charge, and thinks instead of focusing on him, Pike should worry about what will happen to his own crew. Pike beckons him closer, speaking in confidence. He knows the Federation is willing to ignore what goes on outside

their space, but hijacking the Federation flagship will lead to Starfleet hunting them down. Remy doesn't seem bothered, as by the time Starfleet caught up to them, they would have sold the *Enterprise*, and there were plenty in the quadrant who would pay high price for it. Pike concedes that might be true, but would the buyer also want the Federation coming after them? Remy adds that the ship wasn't all they had to sell, wondering what the Klingons would pay for Federation slave labor. The female pirate looks askance at him on hearing that, but says nothing. Pike adds that people like Remy typically knew not to get into deals with the Klingons, because they wouldn't get out alive. Remy replies that he knew what he was doing. As he leaves, Pike smiles to himself.

Spock and Aspen have reached sickbay, where Spock applies a hypospray to treat Aspen's wound. He considers it fortunate the pirates' weapons were set for stun, as the crew were clearly wanted alive. Entering M'Benga's office, Spock sees that Una's security lockdown is still in place, but the pirates have claimed the ship's systems. Aspen asks about the escape pods, but Spock is adamant that the ship must be retaken rather than left in pirate hands. Aspen firmly believes they could not risk being captured by these people, which Spock picks up on, deducing that the counselor has a more personal connection to their adversaries than previously disclosed. Aspen admits their husband, who was Vulcan, had led one of the aid missions to the region when the *Squall* attacked his transport; he had fought back and lost. They had left Starfleet because of it, lamenting that their husband had been so concerned about being perceived as "too emotional" and that logic had probably told him to fight back, and wishing he had allowed himself to be scared. Spock retrieves a Starfleet supply case with a pair of phasers and communicators, saying that the Jefferies tubes would take them to engineering, and from there he could override the security lockdown and send a distress signal. He hands one of the phasers to Aspen, who protests they were not a fighter. Spock considers that based on what they just told him, that assertion was incorrect.

Back on the *Squall*, Pike is tossed into the cage with the crew. M'Benga examines him with his medkit, and gives the captain the good news that his head was not "scrambled". Pike offers more "good news", that he's convinced their captors to sell them to the Klingons. Ortegas then asks if M'Benga's equipment was broken, but Pike explains: Remy thinks selling them to the Klingons is a good idea, but the crew is not fond of the idea. Una realizes what Pike is doing, mentioning Alpha Braga IV. When La'an asks what that is, Una explains that Pike is inciting the pirate crew to mutiny.

Spock and Aspen reach engineering, where they find several unconscious pirates and someone attempting to access the computer. They soon discover Chapel, who is relieved to see them. Spock asks about her "handiwork", and Chapel notes his surprise. She has been trying to send a distress signal, but the security lockdown isn't allowing it. Spock uses his command codes to lift the lockdown and transfer control to engineering. He scans for the *Squall*, while he has Chapel work on communications and Aspen attend to the transporters. But the control is soon rerouted back to the bridge for all systems... and Aspen holds both their and Spock's phasers, pointing at them. They identify themselves as Captain Angel, and the *Serene Squall* was their ship... and now, so was the *Enterprise*.

Arriving on the bridge, Spock comments on Angel's thorough deception. Angel mocks him for his feeling of betrayal, adding that they considered him "cute". Spock retorts that feelings were not his concern, only the safety of the *Enterprise* and her crew, something Angel finds "impressive" even without Kolinahr. Chapel asks about the real Dr. Aspen, and Angel nonchalantly mentions they were still wandering the uninhabited planet the *Squall* had dumped them on. The colonists were a fake, a deception to lure the *Enterprise* into the *Squall*'s trap, which they had to take some of the blame for. The pirates test out the ship's phasers, impressed with the firepower. Spock asks why he and the crew were still needed alive if all Angel wanted was the *Enterprise*, but Angel admits that they had not only come for the *Enterprise*, but Spock himself as well. Spock makes clear he will not give any information, but Angel shrugs that off, saying they only needed Spock to keep being "him".

At Ankeshtan K'til, T'Pring continues to observe the work of those in her charge when she is approached by Stonn, who informs her that there is a subspace transmission coming from the *Enterprise*. It is Angel, who confesses that they find T'Pring attractive for a "prison guard". T'Pring corrects them by saying it was a rehabilitation center, not a prison, but Angel shrugs off the semantics and mentions they have Spock prisoner, dramatically saying they believe she

knew him. Angel finds it convenient, given that a Vulcan associate of theirs, Xaverius, is being held at Ankeshtan K'til. They propose a trade, Vulcan for Vulcan. T'Pring points out that should she agree to such a trade, the high council would revoke her position, she would face criminal charges, and her family would be disgraced. Angel retorts that she was bound to Spock by ritual engagement, and also had responsibilities to him. She could choose to either endure the stigma of losing a prisoner, or allow her "one true love", and one of Vulcan's favored sons, to die. T'Pring makes clear she will not allow intimidation to influence her decisions, but Angel gives her a set of coordinates anyway, where she will meet with the Enterprise on the edge of Federation space to make the exchange. They add a final threat: if T'Pring involves the Federation, she would not have a fiancé left to rescue. After closing the channel, Angel orders a course set. Chapel protests, as T'Pring had made clear she wouldn't go through with it, but Angel is confident she will. Spock reminds Angel that Vulcans were not influenced by emotions, but Angel mocks him by saying they had influenced him by appealing to emotions most of that day, with the sick colonists and the "tragic love lost in battle"; stories, emotions, had gotten him to do exactly what Angel wanted. They admit they're not sure whether it was because he was part Vulcan, part Human, or both, but asks to let them know when he figures it out. Spock points out the irony of Angel questioning his identity, but Angel corrects him by saying that while they had "fudged a detail or two", they had never lied. They had indeed lost the man they loved, but to a Vulcan prison rather than battle. Chapel incredulously asks whether Angel had hijacked a Federation ship and was attempting to blackmail Vulcans simply for love. Angel replies that love was the only thing that made the cold loneliness of space bearable, and could see in Chapel's "rock-hard eyes" that she knew that, too. That, they firmly believe, is why T'Pring will make the deal.

Back on the Squall, as the pirates serve Remy's gruel to the Enterprise crew, Remy's voice sounds over the intercom, saying they were headed to the Qu'Vat Colony to sell "cargo" to the Klingons. Aloud, Pike asks if Remy had what it really took to negotiate with the Klingons. Una adds that he couldn't make a decent gruel, and M'Benga adds his medical opinion that he saw signs of malnourishment in the crew. Pike thinks that since he was the captain, they had to do what he said. The female pirate corrects him by saying Remy was not the captain. Taking this information in, Una still goes forward, asking that if Remy unilaterally changed plans like this, who else he would turn on, especially if things "went south" with the Klingons (to which Pike makes that a "when", not an "if"). The pirate is confident she can take care of herself, but Pike asks about the rest of the crew; she was the only one thinking about the rest of them, which made her captain material in his book. The pirate points out that Remy has friends, but Ortegas is not so sure, having tasted his cooking. Pike is sure she has friends, too, and if she needed them, he had a few more to offer, gesturing to himself and the crew. The pirate thinks this over for a moment, before telling them to eat their gruel, before walking away. Pike and Una are confident they're getting through, just like Alpha Braga IV.

A Vulcan cruiser arrives at the coordinates for the rendezvous with the Enterprise. Angel orders a channel open, and compliments T'Pring on making a "logical" decision, before telling her to prepare the transporter to "trade lovers"... even if theirs doesn't care about logic. Spock is able to deduce who the prisoner is, and tells T'Pring not to go through with it, or to allow the pirates to keep the Enterprise; she tells him to destroy the ship. Angel shoots him down with their phaser, and warns T'Pring that if Xaverius was not beamed over in ten minutes, the next shot would be set to kill.

As Spock regains consciousness, Chapel warns him not to sit up too quickly, but he manages to rise to his feet anyway. T'Pring asks if Spock will not be harmed if she arranges Xaverius' safe transport, and Angel gives her their word. Spock tells Chapel in a low tone that he apologizes for any liberties he is about to take, and asks her to follow his lead. Louder, he tells T'Pring that she was right, that he has given in to his Human side far more than he wished to admit. T'Pring thinks Spock is not communicating effectively. As he tries to explain about himself and Chapel, she sees what he is doing, and speaks up to "confess" to having an affair with Spock. Angel is not buying it, believing it a ruse to convince T'Pring not to make the transfer. Spock is lost for words for a moment, before finally kissing Chapel to "prove" his love for her. T'Pring appears convinced, and Angel offers to let her beam aboard to "straighten things out". T'Pring thinks in light of the information, it was only logical to break their mating bond, and both ultimately do so in the ritual fashion.

Angel is exasperated, and orders their crew to destroy T'Pring's ship. But the weapons and

shields are suddenly locked down... just as the Serene Squall comes out of warp and opens fire on them. The Squall hails them. Pike is at the helm, with Una and Ortega at the consoles in front of him. "I'm only gonna tell you this once," he tells Angel. "Get the hell out of my chair." Una was able to activate a backdoor code to disable the ship's defensive systems, and Pike has Ortega fire to disable the impulse thrusters, but "gently". The weapons fire apparently does a bit more than "gently", but Ortega sarcastically asks what "firing gently" even meant.

The Enterprise has lost both impulse and warp power, and Spock believes the logical decision would be to surrender. Angel thinks there is more to life than logic... and suspects Spock does as well. They admit that for what it was worth, they did enjoy meeting Spock, as Xaverius talked often about him. They urge him not to need to be either Vulcan or Human, which they consider a "false choice". The question wasn't what he was, but who... before pulling the pendant from under their collar and activating its internal transporter. Their ship, the small craft tailing the Enterprise, jumps to warp. As Ortega is left wondering what happened, Pike hails the Enterprise and asks for an update. Spock is now in the captain's chair, reporting he is preparing to beam the crew back. Just then, weapons fire narrowly misses Pike's head, and he asks if Spock could get them off the bridge first; Una explains they had taken the bridge "a little prematurely".

"Captain's log, supplemental. Starfleet has taken the Serene Squall and its colorful crew into custody, although the whereabouts of Captain Angel remain unknown."

Back aboard the Enterprise, now restored to full power, Pike puts on an exaggerated pirate's accent, saying if they ever caught up to Angel, they should "walk the plank". Una tells him to "please stop", while Ortega struggles not to laugh.

In his quarters, Spock is in meditation, when T'Pring enters. He admits he was not sure she would come, and she replies that she was "in the vicinity". He apologizes for the "incident" with Chapel on the bridge. T'Pring admits it was an "impressive gambit" to protect both her reputation and her patients' safety. Spock is surprised she knew it was a ruse, and T'Pring thinks he couldn't actually have feelings for Chapel, thinking it part of a greater plan. She had been right, and was also right about his Human side being a source of strength, believing he could never have sold the kiss with Chapel without it. Spock concedes she knows him well, as she kisses him, suggesting they perform a rebonding ritual, which he agrees is logical.

Later, in sickbay, Spock comes down to thank Chapel for her help, and applaud the "performance" on the bridge. Chapel brusquely answers that lying was not his strong suit, so she did what she could, and doesn't feel the need to talk about it. Spock thought that as a Human, she might want to discuss her feelings. Chapel appears to be conflicted, but says that she likes Vulcans and knows where she stands with Spock, knowing he would not chase another woman while he had a girlfriend, so she knows for certain there were no feelings between them. Spock quietly replies he is glad to hear that, and that she also knew him well, both considering the other a good friend. Before he leaves, Chapel asks about what he had said on the bridge, about knowing the identity of the prisoner Angel wanted released. Spock remembers some of the things Angel had said reminded him of a certain other Vulcan, a child of Sarek born out of wedlock who, though full Vulcan, had rejected the teachings of logic, becoming a V'tosh ka'tur. Chapel remembers that Sarek was also Spock's father, and Spock confirms this, believing that "Xaverius" was an assumed name, and that the prisoner in question was someone he was told to avoid at all costs: his own half-brother, Sybok.

Back at Ankeshtan K'til, T'Pring and Stonn enter Sybok's cell. He is looking out the window at the landscape beyond, and turns his head slightly on hearing their approach.

The Elysian Kingdom

Season 1
Episode Number: 8
Season Episode: 8

Originally aired: Thursday June 23, 2022
Writer: Akela Cooper, Onitra Johnson
Director: Amanda Row
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokin (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Sage Arrindell (Rukiya), Rong Fu (Jenna Mitchell), Makambe Simamba (Adult Rukiya M'Benga), Shannon Widdis (Bridge Crew), Belinda Corpuz (Patient), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer), Kara Wooten (Crimson Guard), Runa Ewok (Runa)
Summary: The U.S.S. Enterprise becomes stuck in a nebula that is home to an alien consciousness that traps the crew in a fairy tale.



"Chief medical officer's personal log, stardate 2341.6. The Enterprise is conducting a routine survey of the Jonisian Nebula. There isn't a great deal for sickbay to do, so I've been continuing my own research. The patient's condition has not improved. Months have become days and have become hours. Every minute has become invaluable. She has so little time

left."

In his shuttered office, Dr. M'Benga conducts scans of his daughter Rukiya, who begs him to continue reading a story to her. He says it was time for her to re-enter the pattern buffer, but she pleads with him to read to her. He relents, and picks up the storybook — *The Kingdom of Elysian* by Benny Russell — and begins to read where he left off, telling of King Ridley's battles with Queen Neve, and of the betrayal of Ridley's court chamberlain, Sir Amand Rauth. The only ally Ridley had was Princess Thalia, whose realm had fallen to Neve's forces. As the doctor reaches the point where King Ridley's outnumbered forces are about to do battle, Rukiya interrupts, saying she hated that part. M'Benga reminds her that she had wanted him to read the story, but Rukiya often wishes for a different ending, where the Huntress and Sir Adya joined forces to rescue the King. Though she knows it was not how the story ended, and that Ridley would have to choose between keeping his great weapon, the Mercury Stone, or saving Princess Thalia, she often wished for a different ending. M'Benga is thoughtful for a moment, before saying that someday, when she is grown, she could write her own stories and choose her own ending... but first, she had to get better. She asks if she can see his quarters when she's better, and he promises that he will take her to see the whole ship.

After putting Rukiya back in the buffer, M'Benga returns to work on a variety of chemical compounds, trying to devise a treatment for his daughter. But as he tests one such compound, it

produces a violent reaction; the sickbay computer detects the presence of chemical 3-QND and quarantines the test container in a forcefield. Later, he is left standing, staring at his various chemicals, when Una enters, asking why a shuttle crew that had returned several hours before had not yet been cleared from active duty. M'Benga apologizes, saying he had been lost in his research. Una knows what he is researching, and asks if he has gotten any closer. M'Benga admits he hasn't, and indeed the last such attempt literally blew up in his face. Una thinks M'Benga is pushing himself too hard, but the doctor is concerned that Rukiya has lived in a transporter buffer for too long, longer than he anticipated... and even so, her time was running out. He firmly believes there is a cure, and he has to find it. Una is sympathetic to his duties as a father, but gently reminds him of his duties as chief medical officer. M'Benga assures her he will attend to the landing party immediately, but Una suggests he rest first; when he protests that he is fine, she makes it an order, as the crew was not going anywhere... and neither was Rukiya.

On the bridge, Spock relays Cadet Uhura's report that all their data buoys have been retrieved, thus completing their survey of the nebula. Captain Pike thinks he could get used to such a mission: "No battles, no chaos, just scanning a nebula and focusing on the science." The captain considers it a "nice change of pace". Spock remarks on how Pike had repeatedly told him of the Human superstition about calling attention to good things by saying them aloud. Pike jokingly replies that he never took Spock for the superstitious type. Taking his chair, Pike orders Ortega to set a course for McNair Starbase, and adds to the whole bridge crew that he was buying the drinks. Ortega plots the course, and asks if Pike was going to say "the thing", which he does: "Hit it." But as Ortega "hits it", nothing happens. Mitchell reports all systems are in the green, but they were frozen in place. Spock's sensors have detected a minor synchrotron flux from the nebula, and he speculates it has affected their warp capabilities... or, he adds, Pike did indeed "jinx it". "Let's hope that's all we have to worry about, Mr. Spock," Pike replies with a smile, as he calls down to engineering. Hemmer reports that they still had warp capability. Spock suggests that the anomaly is affecting their ability to create a stable warp field, and suggests using impulse to move them out of the nebula's gravitational effects. Hemmer concurs with Spock's plan, and Pike so orders it. As Ortega activates the impulse, however, the ship violently rocks, and the navigator strikes her head on the console as she falls to the floor.

Pike calls M'Benga to the bridge for a medical emergency. The doctor, who is in his quarters, acknowledges and makes his way up in the turbolift, a tired and distracted look on his face. As he reaches the bridge, however, he finds it adorned with banners and curtains, and the crew dressed in attire reminiscent of Earth's Renaissance period — including M'Benga himself, much to his surprise. Pike notices him and roughly pushes through the crowd before putting on a smile. "All hail the king!" Pike calls out, and the others present take up the cry as they bow before M'Benga.

"What the hell?" is all the bewildered doctor can say in response.

M'Benga says he was called to attend to Ortega. Pike appears confused for a moment, before he realizes he means Sir Adya, and beckons her forward. The doctor asks if this is some kind of a joke; Pike is prepared to summon the court jester, but M'Benga calls him off. He realizes that they are all dressed as characters from *The Kingdom of Elysian*, with M'Benga as King Ridley, Ortega as Adya, and Pike as Sir Amand Rauth, the court chamberlain. Still thinking it all a prank, M'Benga asks if it was Ortega's idea, and she also seems confused by this. Pike/Rauth suggests that his king should sit, and M'Benga agrees he should, seating himself in the captain's chair, which functions as his throne. Pike/Rauth offers a glass of wine before Ortega/Adya stops him, asking what he was doing and where the wine came from. He replies that he is helping their "poor, tired king" and that the wineglass came from next to the carafe. Ortega/Adya reminds him that it was her duty to tend to the king's well-being, and that he would not drink anything she had not tasted first. Pike/Rauth responds that as chamberlain, his job was to ensure the king's good health. Ortega/Adya tells him that his words could "polish the finest of apples", and sneers that perhaps he was better suited to the kitchen.

M'Benga consults the ship's computer ("the Oracle" as the others know it), seeing if something is somehow affecting the crew. He then thinks to the chemical explosion in sickbay, that perhaps the exposure to 3-QND was causing hallucinations. He heads to return to sickbay, and Pike/Rauth prepares to follow, before asking where this "bay" was and if he had to commandeer a ship, before expressing his belief that the "dreadful fog" was a bad omen the moment he saw it. When M'Benga asks about the fog, Pike/Rauth gestures to the viewscreen, saying that the

"mysterious smoky wall" has engulfed the entire kingdom. Ortega/Adya adds her belief that it was a curse sent by Queen Neve, considering sorcery a "coward's weapon". M'Benga heads back to the turbolift, saying he has to obtain a "magical device" — his tricorder — and asks none of them to follow him.

M'Benga walks the familiar yet altered corridors of the ship, which are strewn with vines, with fireflies dancing through the air. Everyone he passes bows or curtsies before him. He enters sickbay, finding Nurse Chapel there, as Lady Audrey. He obtains his tricorder and sees on the screen that his readings are perfectly normal. Chapel/Audrey, who appears to be some kind of spirit healer, holds out her hands and feels the "king's" pain, saying he should have come to her sooner. He runs the tricorder over her as well, seeing her dopamine levels are elevated. Just then, Ortega/Adya enters, apologetic about disobeying his order not to follow, but says that Princess Thalia insisted. Thalia is embodied by La'an, and appears to be lost in music only she can hear. La'an/Thalia is extremely glad to see him, telling him that Queen Neve and her Crimson Guard have invaded her kingdom searching for the Mercury Stone, and that she barely escaped with her life... "not to mention my poor little Runa," she laments, hugging her dog close. M'Benga is torn between amusement and bewilderment at the whole situation, as La'an/Thalia goes on to say that she knows he has the stone. Remembering the story, M'Benga replies that indeed, the stone is safe. She urges him to harness the stone, or else Neve would enslave them all. M'Benga runs his tricorder over La'an/Thalia, and finds her dopamine levels are also elevated. Ortega/Adya offers to lead an attack against the Crimson Guard, but M'Benga hopes to avoid any "unnecessary head chopping". Just then, he hears Hemmer ordering Mitchell to unhand him. Adya thinks it is the Crimson Guard.

Hemmer, appearing to be as lucid to the situation as M'Benga, is being dragged down the hall by two others, and warns Mitchell that he will have her court-martialed. He appears to be in some kind of wizard's robe, while Mitchell and her compatriots are in the attire of the Crimson Guard. Mitchell tells Hemmer that he will be punished for his crimes. Hemmer protests his ignorance of the entire situation, calling it "absurd". Just then, La'an/Thalia approaches, with M'Benga, Ortega/Adya, and Chapel/Audrey behind him. She tells the "evil Crimson Guard" that King Ridley was there to strike fear into their "evil hearts". M'Benga is more confused than anything else, but sees that Hemmer is dressed as the wizard Castor, and tells the Crimson Guards to release him at once. Mitchell replies that she does not answer to the "false king", unless he was there to surrender the Mercury Stone. M'Benga, getting into character, points out that per the Letter of Accords, Lady Audrey's woods were neutral territory by royal agreement. Mitchell sneers that Queen Neve no longer recognized the Letter of Accords, and that she claimed those woods... and would take Ridley's kingdom, too. The Crimson Guards take Hemmer through to the turbolift. When M'Benga addresses the chief engineer by name, Hemmer begs the doctor to help him, as everyone else had lost their minds. Ortega/Adya thinks it was time to unleash the Mercury Stone. M'Benga, determined to rescue Hemmer, says that he does not actually have it, but that Castor knows where it is.

In the conference room, now King Ridley's sanctuary, Pike/Rauth shows a map of the Enterprise, now representing the Kingdom of Elysian. He knows Castor will be held in Queen Neve's dungeons at the center of her realm (just forward of the navigational deflector), where he will be surrounded by Neve's most powerful forces and deadliest weapons. La'an/Thalia pleads with M'Benga not to go, as he would fall prey to Neve's powers. Pike/Rauth agrees, suggesting diplomacy; Ortega/Adya is disdainful, saying that they needed the Mercury Stone, and it was hard to hear over the sound of the chamberlain's "trembling boots". M'Benga silences them, saying they would try diplomacy first, and if that failed, then Ortega/Adya could cut something in half. The knight remarks that her sword Starfall is itching for battle, and Pike/Rauth considers that a ridiculous name for a sword. As they get to bickering again, M'Benga regains control, firmly telling them both to escort him to Queen Neve... with as little bickering as possible. La'an/Thalia asks about herself, and Runa. M'Benga suggests Runa should remain behind, and Thalia as well to protect her. This seems to satisfy her, as she will await their return — and if the "king" should fall, she would sing a song of mourning (with the words "of mourning" in song, along with a set of vocalized notes). Pike/Rauth seems to have other ideas, thinking he should remain behind, but M'Benga commands him to come along.

Entering the "forest", Ortega/Adya remarks on the number of crimson banners, and that Neve grew more bold by the day. She then realizes they were not alone, and holds her king back

before drawing her sword, demanding that whoever it was step forward. It is Spock, portraying the wizard Pollux, who expresses surprise on seeing King Ridley there, wondering if it was brave or foolish. M'Benga explains they sought Castor, and Spock/Pollux chuckles at the "fool's errand", knowing he was held by Queen Neve. Ortigas/Adya demands to know what is stopping them from simply marching in and taking Castor. "The Swamp of Infinite Deaths," Spock/Pollux answers, adding that the only route to Queen Neve's realm would take them straight through it. Pike/Rauth is clearly wanting to turn around and go back, and Ortigas/Adya remarks that she would die infinite deaths just to no longer hear his whining. M'Benga asks Spock/Pollux if there was no way he could help them. When the wizard asks why he should, M'Benga answers that he knows Castor is his brother, explaining when asked that he read it in a book. Spock/Pollux asks if he would help Castor, rather than simply use him, and M'Benga promises to free him in exchange for help through the swamp. The wizard agrees to take them on the secret route, a "dark way", around the swamp.

The "dark way" is a Jefferies tube, a "tunnel" leading to Neve's dungeons. As Spock/Pollux enters, Ortigas/Adya asks if they can trust him. M'Benga knows they can't, but also knows it's the only way to reach Castor. The "tunnel" leads them into engineering... which is also the throne room of Queen Neve, portrayed in this story by Uhura. "Welcome to my kingdom," Uhura/Neve greets them. "Now kneel." Pike/Rauth immediately does so, much to Ortigas/Adya's disgust, realizing they had been led into a trap. M'Benga suspected as much, knowing that Neve would enter the story at about this point. Uhura/Neve greets him, then demands the Mercury Stone. M'Benga replies that it could be anywhere. With a sigh, the evil queen decides to have her torturers get the information out of him instead, adding that they loved their work. She also promises to compensate Spock/Pollux for his loyalty. The wizard thanks her, before saying that they had sought his brother... so now they could join him in the dungeon.

Trapped inside the transporter room, serving as Queen Neve's dungeons, Pike/Rauth whines piteously about the walls closing in on him. M'Benga is relieved to see Hemmer, who asks if they were the only members of the crew unaffected. The doctor believes they are, and explains that they were acting out parts from a storybook he had been reading to his daughter. Hemmer is surprised at this revelation, and M'Benga adds it would be a long story. He believes the important question would be to find out why it was only the two of them who were not affected, to which Ortigas/Adya speaks up, thinking the real important question was where the Mercury Stone was. M'Benga explains this part of the story to Hemmer, and that his character, Castor, would help King Ridley find it. He knows Hemmer has no idea, but since he is also unaffected, M'Benga believes he can help him solve the real problem. Hemmer recalls he was in engineering when he suddenly felt a consciousness press against his own, but his telepathic training allowed him to block it. He didn't have time to figure out the source, and speculates that this same entity pulled the story from M'Benga's mind. The "why" was impossible to determine without asking the entity in question. M'Benga asks if he could make contact again. Hemmer is reluctant, having found the contact "unpleasant", comparing it to feeling like his brain was being squeezed through his nose (to which Ortigas/Adya adds she did that to a man once), but was able to determine that the entity did not come from a ship, but from the Jonisian Nebula itself. M'Benga wonders if they could find out more from the ship's scanners, and Hemmer agrees it was possible... but first, they had to escape. Playing the part for a moment, he thinks he could help with the "powerful magic called science", as he produces a laser cutter from under his robe.

As he prepares to cut through the metal door, Hemmer asks what a Human magician would say, and M'Benga answers with "abracadabra", which Hemmer seems to like. He warns the others not to look, as it would blind them; when Pike/Rauth asks about him, the naturally-blind Aenar answers only, "I am a wizard." He cuts through the lock of the door and opens it for them to escape. Pike/Rauth is relieved and immediately pushes through first, followed by the amused M'Benga. Ortigas/Adya compliments the "wizard", saying she likes this "science". A thoroughly satisfied Hemmer blows the tip of his cutter as if it was smoke from a six-shooter.

Uhura/Neve is incensed to learn the prisoners have escaped, with Mitchell explaining Castor "conjured" them out. When the queen asks why she was standing there cowering instead of chasing them, Mitchell replies she was about to. Uhura/Neve angrily replies that she was "about to" lose her head, and that she should be grateful her queen was feeling merciful today, giving her Crimson Guards another chance to regain her favor. She turns to Spock/Pollux, commanding him to lead her guards to hunt down the prisoners, before she put him in the dungeon in their

place.

Making their way to engineering, Hemmer explains he can block the door to allow them time to access the ship's scanners, just as Spock/Pollux and the Crimson Guards approach. Ortegas/Adya commands them to get out of the way. "Or what?" Mitchell sneers, as the loyal knight was unarmed. This does not present much trouble for Ortegas/Adya, who takes down one of the Crimson Guards and arms herself with his blade. Pike/Rauth suggests he should retreat to the castle, and quickly runs away. Hemmer is incredulous at the idea of Pike running away, and M'Benga explains that his character was not known for bravery. Meanwhile, Ortegas/Adya is holding her own for a time, but is soon overpowered. As Mitchell is about to come in for the kill, several arrows fly down the corridor. Spock/Pollux wisely decides to retreat. Their rescuer is Una, in character as Z'ymira the Huntress, a friend of Sir Adya. Hemmer impatiently suggests carrying on to engineering, and M'Benga agrees it was time to end the fantasy before someone seriously got hurt.

As he conducts the scans in engineering, Hemmer is puzzled by the readings. The scanners detect a single lifeform with neural activity, but no sign of a physical body — a consciousness without physical form, floating in space, with the power to create a new reality. Una/Z'ymira thinks it sounds almost like a god. Hemmer asks M'Benga if he's familiar with the theory of the Boltzmann brain, and the doctor recalls hearing something of it in university. Hemmer explains that it was a spontaneously-generated consciousness, and thinks that they have now encountered one. M'Benga puzzles over this: "So one day, out of nothing, an all-powerful being just... appears? And this consciousness has somehow trapped our ship in the nebula, and turned the crew into characters from a book I've read?" Hemmer points out that at least it made M'Benga the hero of the story. Supposing that Hemmer is right, M'Benga wonders, how do they get it to stop? Hemmer speculates that M'Benga himself is the source of the problem, as their environment was created from his reading of the story; perhaps the entity would release them if that connection were somehow severed — if M'Benga were injured, for instance. Ortegas/Adya thinks this a threat to her king, and M'Benga orders her to stand down. Una/Z'ymira offers to shoot him with an arrow, and is confused when she gets a slap on the arm for her suggestion, as she thought they were trying to "hurt the king". They begin to argue about their service — Ortegas/Adya to King Ridley, Una/Z'ymira as Huntress of the Forest — when Hemmer suggests their differences were what brought them together. M'Benga realizes something was wrong — he knew that was not how the story went, as Adya and Z'ymira had never met. He realizes that the entire fantasy is actually based on Rukiya's expressed wish, that Adya and Z'ymira joined forces to save King Ridley. She had said she hated how the story ended, and wanted Adya and Z'ymira to team up. Hemmer incredulously asks if the story was not actually taken from M'Benga himself, but from his daughter, and M'Benga's nod is all the answer needed. "Where is Rukiya?" is Hemmer's next question.

Returning to sickbay, M'Benga checks the transporter, but discovers that the pattern buffer is empty — Rukiya is gone.

M'Benga discovers Rukiya was taken out of the pattern buffer at 0845 that morning, and beamed somewhere onto the ship, but the computer is not telling him precisely where. He explains to Hemmer that his daughter is very ill, and the longer she is out of the buffer, the faster her illness progresses. Hemmer immediately offers to help; M'Benga thinks that Rukiya is the key to getting them out of the situation. Just outside, Spock/Pollux is listening, and smiles to himself before going to report his findings to Queen Neve.

Uhura/Neve is incredulous at the idea that the Mercury Stone is in fact a girl, but then realizes the implications; if this was true, she would simply take her as her own. When Spock/Pollux asks how, Uhura/Neve gestures to her guards, who bring in Pike/Rauth, gibbering about how he was too young to die, and pleads for mercy. Uhura/Neve tells him that whether he lived or died depended on him. He asks what she wants of him, and she demands his loyalty. He is surprised at the simplicity of her demand, and readily bows before her. She chuckles in satisfaction.

Back in sickbay, Chapel/Audrey is mixing a cauldron, while Una/Z'ymira rushes off, hearing the forest's call, as Ortegas/Adya puts it. M'Benga becomes frustrated with his inability to find Rukiya, and Hemmer suggests that maybe they were looking at it the wrong way, asking where his daughter would want to go. Recalling the last conversation he had with her, M'Benga heads towards his quarters. Pike/Rauth is waiting for them, glad to see his king alive and safe (no thanks to his cowardice, as Ortegas/Adya points out). M'Benga tells them it was not the time to

fight, as he had to get inside his quarters. He orders the doors to open, just as Pike/Rauth pulls a knife and holds it to his throat. Uhura/Neve and her Crimson Guards, joined by Spock/Pollux, march down the corridor. Ortega/Adya reluctantly puts her sword on the floor, and Pike/Rauth mockingly apologizes. "Did you really think I was going to let you destroy everything I've worked for, King Ridley?" Uhura/Neve asks.

Ortega/Adya is apologetic, having suspected the chamberlain would betray them. M'Benga ruefully admits he should have remembered that too, as that was what happened in the book. Pike/Rauth mockingly apologizes again, saying that he had been promised Ridley's kingdom in return for his loyalty. As King Ridley would not bend the knee before her, Uhura/Neve found someone who would. Spock/Pollux calls upon his "brother" to surrender, as his powers were greater, and there was no need for any of them to die. The evil queen agrees, and that all she wanted was the Mercury Stone. M'Benga is now wrathful — both in character as King Ridley and as a father — and tells his foe that she will not touch his daughter, or he will bring the full might of his kingdom down upon her. Hemmer, trying to play along, decides to unleash "the full power of his powerful wizard... powers" — and uses a communicator he grabbed in sickbay to beam Uhura/Neve, Spock/Pollux, and the Crimson Guards into a cargo bay. "Once again, the power of science prevails!" he crows dramatically, before asking if it was "too much". M'Benga looks amused as he asks Ortega/Adya to guard his quarters.

Inside M'Benga's quarters, Rukiya is looking out the viewport into the nebula, and is overjoyed to see her father. Taking up his medical tricorder, M'Benga scans Rukiya and is astonished to find no trace of cygnokemia. When he asks how, Rukiya says that her "friend" made her better, looking outside. M'Benga realizes she means the lifeform in the nebula. Rukiya has been watching her father play the role of King Ridley, and asks if he had fun doing it. He admits he did, but asks if things could be brought back to normal. Rukiya asks why, as her friend told her they could play as long as she wanted, but M'Benga tells her that though he's sure her "friend" didn't mean to, it was hurting his friends, and they had to return to their lives. She asks if this meant she had to go back into the buffer, and he admits he doesn't know, as he doesn't fully understand what was going on. He asks to speak to her "friend", but Rukiya explains it didn't work that way. Hemmer decides to offer his assistance there; though he had said it would risk his life, Hemmer thinks that if Rukiya told her "friend" they needed to talk, the entity might be more inclined to cooperate. Rukiya looks out the viewport, and says they would like to talk; Hemmer offers to allow them to speak through him, asking only that they be gentle.

The Aenar's body shudders as the presence enters his mind, before he speaks again in an altered voice. "You must not take the child," the entity says. M'Benga assures them that no harm was meant, but that the fantasy must end, as it was harming the crew. The entity calls the lives of the crew "inconsequential", saying that he must protect the child. M'Benga realizes that the entity has formed an attachment to Rukiya, and they confirm this, saying they were alike. Rukiya explains they were lonely, as she was. M'Benga asks how the entity knew this, and they reply that while they probed the Enterprise, they found Rukiya "imprisoned" in the pattern buffer. They sensed her loneliness, and it matched their own, so they created this world for her — where she would have a piece of her childhood that he had seemingly denied her. M'Benga is indignant at that accusation, saying that he was seeking a cure for her, and everything he did was for her. He again asks the entity to release the ship and crew, but the entity replies that if they leave, Rukiya will die. Their proximity was what made her well, and if they allowed the ship to leave, she would grow sick again. M'Benga is adamant that the ship cannot stay. "Then you must make a choice," the entity replies. "The crew, or your daughter." M'Benga protests that he cannot be forced to make that choice. Rukiya says that she enjoyed being outside the buffer, but would return to it if she had to. M'Benga is adamant there must be another way, and the entity replies that there is: the Enterprise and her crew could leave, but Rukiya had to stay. M'Benga asks how she would live, and the entity replies that it was only her body that was ill; her consciousness would join with the entity, where she would be free of sickness, and would never know death.

Seeing the choices he had, M'Benga kneels next to his daughter, and tells her that her "friend" wants her to go with them. She asks if he can come too. M'Benga reminds her about how, in the story, King Ridley wanted to keep the Mercury Stone, as it protected him and made him happy... until he learned it had a soul, and that it would die if he held onto it; he had to let it go, even if it meant he would not be happy anymore. For M'Benga, Rukiya was his Mercury Stone. He recalls how he told her she could write her own stories someday, and perhaps that time was now... but

it was up to her. She chooses to go with her "friend", and embraces her father for the last time. Hemmer begins to shake again, and collapses onto M'Benga's bunk. As he does, a swirling energy projects from his body and surrounds Rukiya, who giggles, saying it tickled, before she is taken away into the nebula. M'Benga is left standing alone, staring at where she had been, before the light shimmers and materializes again. M'Benga is shocked to see it is Rukiya again, now a grown woman. She thanks him, saying he was right about the adventures she had had, and all that she had seen. M'Benga is confused, as she had just left mere seconds before, but seconds for him were years for Rukiya and Debra. The doctor is moved to hear that Rukiya named her "friend" for her mother, and how the grown Rukiya looks so much like her. She was happy and safe now, and she assures him that he did the right thing. She knows they will meet again someday, but for now, he had to live his own life, create his own stories, and asks him to promise her that he will be happy. With tears in his eyes, he does. She kisses his cheek, and disappears.

After the light fades, M'Benga is back in uniform, and Hemmer regains consciousness, complaining of "the worst headache", and is confused to be in the doctor's quarters. The last thing he recalls is becoming stuck in the Jonisian Nebula.

"Chief medical officer's personal log, supplemental. None of the crew remember what happened. The entity's doing, my daughter's doing, I'm sure. The surveillance logs are blank. It's as if every one of them lost five hours. Except for me."

As M'Benga reaches the end of The Kingdom of Elysian, Una is standing in the entrance to his office, addressing him by his first name, Joseph. She asks about Rukiya, and he is content to know that she was alive and safe. He has been through something he considers extraordinary, and yet no one on the ship remembers. Una realizes he knows what happened during the missing five hours, and thinks it sounds like "a hell of a story". The doctor smiles, and agrees that it is. "It begins like all good stories," he says. "Once upon a time."

All Those Who Wander

Season 1

Episode Number: 9

Season Episode: 9

Originally aired:	Thursday June 30, 2022
Writer:	Davy Perez
Director:	Christopher J. Byrne
Show Stars:	Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokun (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars:	Dan Jeannotte (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk), Carlos Albornoz (Buckley), André Dae Kim (Chief Kyle), Jessica Danecker (Cadet Chia), Emma Ho (Oriana), Jennifer Hui (Ensign Christina), Teddy Kellogg (Lieutenant Duke), Cameron Roberts (Manu Noonien-Singh), Liza Seneca (Captain Alice Gavin (voice)), Ava Cheung (Young La'an), Shannon Widdis (Bridge Crew)
Summary:	The U.S.S. Enterprise crew comes face-to-face with their demons — and scary monsters too — when their landing party is stranded on a barren planet with a ravenous enemy.



"Cadet's personal log, stardate 2510.6. My assignment to Enterprise is over. After we complete our current mission delivering vidium power cells to Deep Space Station K-7, I go back to Earth. I'm excited to see my grandmother. Our last call was cut short. Life on a starship has a way of taking over. I've rotated through almost every department. So many amazing,

talented people. The top everyone of everything. They all know why they belong in Starfleet. For them, Starfleet has always been the destination. For me, it was where I ran to after the loss of my parents. Serving aboard Enterprise is an affirmation of this entire crew's hopes and dreams. I envy their surety. But me? I guess I'm still searching."

Captain Pike addresses a gathering of the crew in his quarters for "the big send-off", congratulating Cadets Chia and Uhura for completing their training rotation on the Enterprise. He commends them both as exemplary members of the crew, both dedicated and hard-working. They had seen and survived some things together, and were bonded "now and forever" in the Starfleet family. He then calls Ensign Duke front and center, where he receives a promotion to lieutenant, Una handing him his new insignia.

Uhura keeps her distance from the gathering, and Lieutenant Ortegas notices how after all the time she had been on the ship, Uhura still shied away from the crowd. Uhura admits she hates goodbyes. Pike approaches, asking if she hasn't decided to stay on yet, letting her know that the Enterprise would always have a place for her. Just then, Spock calls from the bridge to inform the captain that there was an incoming priority one mission from Starfleet Command.

Una is confused by this, as she thought they were already on a priority one mission. Pike asks where La'an is, and Una explains she couldn't make it due to scheduled personal health time. The captain decides to catch her up later, and asks for science and medical to be assembled for the incoming briefing.

Later, Pike is cleaning up after the party, while Una insists they had to send someone else. Pike replies that it was not someone else's mission. La'an enters, having been speaking with Starfleet psychiatrist Dr. Sanchez, whom she dismisses as a "head-shrinker". Spock and Dr. M'Benga are also present. Spock explains that four days earlier, the USS *Peregrine* activated its distress beacon before losing contact. Pike hands over his apron and dishwashing duties to Spock and hands La'an a plate, having saved it for her. La'an replies she is not hungry, but Una insists she try the omelette and the bacon ("And the waffle," M'Benga pipes up). Pike goes on to say that the *Peregrine*'s message took two days to reach Starfleet, and it took another two for the news to reach the *Enterprise*. La'an then thinks (while enthusing over Pike's cooking, as the others had promised) that there was a possibility, however slim, that they still may make contact. The *Peregrine* had been making an unscheduled landing on a Class L planet, Valeo Beta V, at the time of transmission; the ship made its descent, but the beacon went out in mid-transmission. La'an speculates the *Peregrine* may have been destroyed on impact, but Spock expresses the belief that the planet's interference is blocking the signal, with charged nitrate ions in its upper atmosphere. The planet was a known "dead zone", with no communications or transporter signals reaching the surface. La'an notes that the *Peregrine* is a Sombra-class ship; M'Benga recalls serving on one before, and that it used the same parts as a Constitution-class. The *Peregrine* had gone off the grid exploring uncharted sectors; Pike's orders from Starfleet were to rescue the crew and, if at all possible, retrieve the ship. La'an asks about their current mission to K-7; without the power cells, the station's systems would go dark, including life support. Vidium cells also decayed on transport, and the nearest ship that could take them was a week away, a timeframe that would render them useless. La'an suggests sending a landing party to Valeo Beta V while the *Enterprise* continued with its cargo to K-7. Una is concerned about the risks, and Pike is well aware the planet was a dead zone, but he had absolute faith in the crew. Pike intends to oversee the mission personally, taking the cadets on one last away mission with the senior officers, while Una took the *Enterprise* to K-7.

Two shuttles fly through the atmosphere of the snow-covered planet; geothermal anomalies force them to land several kilometers from the *Peregrine*. Spock admonishes the crew to act quickly, as an ice storm would come through that area in approximately six hours. His team consists of Lieutenants Kirk and Duke, Nurse Chapel, Cadets Chia and Uhura, and Hemmer, who revels in the cold wind, saying it felt like his homeworld of Andoria. Duke asks if the anomalies were what was affecting their comms, and Spock tells him (using his old rank of ensign) that it was the ionic interference in the atmosphere. Kirk chuckles, saying Spock owed Duke a drink; Chapel reminds him that Duke was a lieutenant now, and by calling him by his old rank he owed Duke a drink, saying it was a Starfleet tradition. Spock is bemused at learning of another Human drinking game, asking if their number had any limit. "Nope!" is Kirk's cheerful reply.

La'an is on point for Pike and M'Benga; the doctor's scans indicate the *Peregrine* landed in a chasm, and he has detected no life signs due to the interference. "Captain, might not be a scanning problem," La'an reports, as she finds a bloodied corpse buried in the snow.

As the landing party opens the airlocks into the ship, the ice quickly begins to form in the corridors. They discover more signs of blood, while Pike brings the lights back on. Spock reports that bridge controls were completely offline, their functions routed to engineering. Hemmer finds plasma in the circuits, thinking the crew used the warp core for emergency power because the backup generators were down; Uhura reports the matter-antimatter reactor was "busted", and environmental systems were down to twenty percent. Pike is pleased to see he brought the right people for the job, and asks Hemmer if he could get power back up. Hemmer thinks he can, but would have to work from engineering, and asks Spock to get the bridge controls back up. La'an has conducted her sweep and reports it is "grim", having found twenty confirmed casualties, including the *Peregrine*'s captain, Alice Gavin. The *Peregrine* had a full crew of ninety-nine. M'Benga has determined that most died of hypothermia, their environmental suits shredded by the elements, and La'an adds that some of the bodies were picked apart, possibly by local wildlife. The doctor speculates that they went outside, got caught in a storm, and couldn't back their way back to the ship. Pike orders his team to recover the ship's logs.

Kirk and Chapel continue their survey of the outside. Kirk remarks on how the place would be "pretty damn creepy" at night, and Chapel thinks it already creepy now. Chia calls for Kirk, as she and Duke have found something. They can only stare in horror. "What the hell did this?" Kirk asks as he surveys the grisly scene — several members of the crew torn apart, their heads, body parts, and weapons strewn across the landscape.

Uhura brings up the ship's log, but is only able to get audio. The log entry is by Captain Gavin, reporting that the Peregrine was mapping non-Federation space when they picked up three castaways on a class M planet: A Human girl, a humanoid of unknown origin, and an Orion named Pasko. They soon discovered that Pasko was infected with Gorn eggs, and the ship's biofilters didn't pick them up. But Pasko knew, and set off a plasma grenade in engineering to try to end it. The system sent an automatic distress call as a result of the explosion, but Gavin noted in her log that if she could reach Starfleet, she would tell them to stay away and not come to the planet. Pike has Spock and M'Benga gather the rest of the crew. Knowing of La'an's past experience, he asks what she wants to do. La'an admits she wants to kill the Gorn, but would settle for finding any survivors and getting off the planet. Uhura brings up internal sensors and detects two life signs on deck five, one Human, one unknown. Pike has Hemmer work to get back what systems he can, while he, La'an, and Uhura investigate the interior of the ship.

As they investigate the wrecked corridors of the Peregrine, Pike discovers another body, badly mangled. Uhura is shaken on seeing this, but quickly hurries to catch up to the captain and La'an. Reaching an open doorway, they hear clattering noises within, and see the shadow of movement in what appears to be firelight coming from the room. As they approach, a blue-skinned humanoid steps through the door, menacing them with some kind of stun stick, and speaking a language the universal translator is not picking up. La'an tells Uhura to "do something", but the cadet protests that it was not how linguistics worked. Then she remembers there had been two life signs detected, meaning the stranger was protecting someone, and urges Pike and La'an to lower their weapons. Both do so — Pike immediately, La'an reluctantly — as they follow the stranger inside, where they find the Human girl mentioned in Gavin's log.

In the blood-stained sickbay, Spock asks for supplies to treat a burn wound. Chapel notes that Spock appears to be fine, but he clarifies that it was for Duke, who did not take potential instabilities into account while climbing through a Jefferies tube. He does not see the logic in Duke asking him to go for medical supplies instead of coming to seek treatment himself. Chapel replies that he made rank and is "acting tough". Spock notes the "flawed Human emotion" of pride, and is glad for the teachings of Surak to get past such things, as there was no pride in logic. Chapel recalls hearing that Vulcans had a "hidden primal nature", and Spock concedes that Vulcan emotion is dangerous without proper mindfulness, but they used logic to not succumb to anger. "It's good to get mad sometimes," Chapel says as she hands him the supplies.

Working to restore power, Uhura remarks on how she will miss Hemmer when she leaves. Hemmer thinks that "nonsense", as people had a tendency to come back around in Starfleet. Uhura is not so sure, recalling during their mission to Finibus III when they had talked about their life paths, and she hadn't been able to answer. She had asked herself why she didn't have an answer, and realized she had just been drifting, and it was time to stop coasting. Hemmer asks if she considers serving in Starfleet to be "coasting", and she admits she doesn't know. She has no idea where she will end up, but at least she's not afraid to face it alone. Hemmer finds that interesting, as he never considered her to fear being alone — indeed, quite the opposite. He thinks she enjoys making friends when she wants to, but deep down that scared her, as her real fear was putting down roots. He understands that it was better to leave than be the one left behind, but feels that was wrong. He firmly tells her that creating bonds was a gift, and that while the people she cared about would cause her pain, the love it yielded will far outweigh the sorrow.

Back in sickbay, M'Benga and Chapel examine the castaways. The girl identifies herself as Oriana, while she refers to her companion as "Buckley". She asks if they were getting out of there. La'an enters, stern and cold, wanting to be absolutely sure that neither of them are infected with Gorn eggs. M'Benga tells her twice that he had conducted thorough scans, but La'an is not satisfied, harshly asking Oriana if either she or Buckley were infected, and why they didn't say anything about the eggs when they were brought onboard. M'Benga shuts her down and tells her to leave his "daughter" alone, before he realizes what he said and corrects that to "patient", telling her to be "useful" somewhere else.

In the CMO's office, Pike has conducted scans and has determined the ship was clean; what happened outside seemed to be the end of it. La'an sees that Oriana was reported missing two years earlier, and thinks the three castaways were survivors of a breeding planet. The Gorn only harvest their young sporadically, so whatever was born on the Peregrine was likely alone. However, she warns him not to take comfort in that, as they were equally lethal on the ground. Though comms were still down, Pike knows they can still do a security sweep. M'Benga enters as Pike leaves, remarking on how a soprano could sing an E minor, and people associated a feeling. However, it was not about the melody, but how one's own reflections made it emotional. La'an insists she was not being emotional, but M'Benga was referring to himself, having called Oriana his daughter (thinking on the recent departure of Rukiya). He points out that Oriana was in a place few people could understand, and that like La'an, she had a chance to grow beyond the pain twisting up inside her. La'an admits that there was no "magic button" to press — one simply survived. "She just needs someone to help her see the light," M'Benga replies.

Phaser at the ready, Spock sweeps the deck when he hears something moving. Walking through a nearby door, he finds a trail of blood across the floor, following it to a tear through the hull leading outside, the wind howling into it. As he kneels to investigate, he jumps as a hand touches his shoulder — Pike, with M'Benga right behind him. The doctor is amused that Spock was so jumpy, and takes the supplies intended for Duke. Spock continues to look worriedly around the corridor.

In sickbay, Buckley has severely labored breathing and an elevated heart rate. Chapel notes unusual reddish vein-like protrusions across his body. Seeing his distressed state, Oriana knows what is coming, and quickly hides behind the nearby wall, putting her hands over her mouth to cover her breathing. While Chia is working under the biobed to calibrate it for a physical, Buckley begins screaming in agony as a creature begins to burst from his skin — a Gorn hatchling. As Chia calls for Chapel, the hatchling leaps out and slashes right through the cadet's throat, killing her instantly. Chapel returns in horror to find Chia's twitching body on the floor, as more hatchlings erupt from Buckley's corpse.

As the hatchlings run through the sickbay, Chapel quickly leaps up onto a biobed and activates the containment field.

Meanwhile, M'Benga treats Duke's burn wound, Kirk remarking on how "lucky" he was, as the conduits in the Jefferies tube had a full current. The doctor concurs, saying he could be amputating. Duke laments on how he nearly loses an arm in his first mission as a lieutenant, but Pike assures him that such things could happen. Just then, two hatchlings leap from the Jefferies tube and tear into Duke. Pike calls for Kirk to hold him so he can shoot them off without hitting the lieutenant, but it is too late, as he is dragged, bloody and screaming, down the corridor. Even Spock is shaken by the attack, and Pike grimly tells them to inform the rest of the crew immediately.

In sickbay, Chapel urgently whispers for Oriana, as she deactivates the shield and gingerly makes her way across the room. She is startled by movement behind her, only to find La'an there. The security chief takes in the grisly scene with a dispassionate eye, noting four hatchlings coming out of Buckley's body, with one dead. They would mature rapidly, then fight for dominance. Communications were still down, and the bioscans show the landing party, but no sign of the Gorn, meaning they could hide from sensors. La'an hands Chapel her phaser and tells her to watch the ceilings, and to shoot anything that moves. As she takes up another phaser for herself, La'an searches for Oriana, starting with where they found her. They soon discover Oriana hiding behind a crate. Chapel assures Oriana they were there to keep her safe, but La'an points out that she was safe; she knows how Gorn hate cold, and this was the coldest place on the ship. La'an would have hidden in such a place herself in that position. Oriana remembers how "people before" — the crew of the Peregrine— had tricked the Gorn into going outside, but now the Gorn had returned. She is convinced if they leave that room, they will die. La'an remembers her own experience on the Gorn breeding planet and how her brother Manu had told her to run. She tells Oriana that her brother died in the same way Buckley did, and knew what it was like to watch the Gorn hurt the people she loved, but now here she was. Her job was to keep the people she came with safe, and believes the crew could do anything, even defeat the Gorn. "There's surviving, and then there's living," she says, recalling what Pike had told her when she first came aboard.

In engineering, Hemmer and Uhura have completed their repairs, with the cadet marking it a

victory for "Team Hemhura". Hemmer allows Uhura to do the honors, and she brings the power back up. As an alarm sounds, they hear movement. Hemmer is uncertain what it is, but he is able to smell Human blood.

In sickbay, Pike is glad to see Hemmer has made progress as the power comes back up. Kirk expresses the belief that if they stayed inside the ship, they would be "lizard chow", and thinks they should make a run for the shuttles. Spock notes the ice storm would have just begun, making it unsafe to leave the ship. Kirk angrily points out that it wasn't safe inside the ship either, but sarcastically notes they could die "nice and warm". M'Benga quietly suggests giving him a sedative, but Pike knows Kirk is stronger than he looks, and plus he needed everyone alert. Spock is able to access internal comms, and Pike orders a shipwide channel, informing the others to regroup in sickbay.

Back in engineering, one of the Gorn hatchlings leaps through, only to be killed and devoured by one of the others, now much larger. Uhura tells Hemmer to make a run for it. Hemmer senses the Gorn looking towards Uhura, and pushes her out of the way as it spits, taking the brunt of the attack himself. A phaser shot from La'an narrowly misses the Gorn, which retreats.

M'Benga consults the Peregrine's medical logs, showing a post-mortem on one of the Gorn. Spock notes the Gorn's genetic makeup allowed them to hide from their sensors, which was why M'Benga had not detected the eggs inside Buckley. Pike asks if there was anything from Buckley's bioscans they could use, but M'Benga isn't even sure what species he was. However, he does know the incubation cycle of the Gorn depended on the species; with Orions it took weeks, Humans days. Spock also notes the ducts in the Gorn's mouth that could expel venom. Hemmer enters at that moment, confirming this, and saying it burned "quite tremendously". Spock thinks it a method to blind their prey, something that made the naturally-blind Aenar "not the best target". Pike knows Hemmer has rules about telepathy, but wonders if that applied to an enemy trying to eat them. Hemmer says if he could, he would, but the Gorn had a psychic barrier to his abilities; he couldn't sense them at all. Spock considers this "impressive", much like their genetic coding. Kirk is incensed by Spock's analytical observations, reminding him that it had killed Duke right in front of him, asking if that hit him at all, or if he was just some kind of "pointy-eared computer". Pike puts an end to the argument and tries to focus them back on the mission.

Hemmer reports that the navigation systems were the only thing left to restore, meaning their mission was more or less complete. All that was left now was dealing with the Gorn, and Pike asks La'an for a tactical analysis. She notes the hatchlings have begun molting, but were not fully mature yet. With two left, they would be the strongest, the smartest, and extremely hostile to each other. She is emphatic that no matter what, they had to kill the hatchlings now, as they had no chance even against just one adult. Pike sees the crew's ability to work together as an advantage. M'Benga points out that the younglings were too fast to hunt, so they needed to create a choke point to trap them. La'an knows they are intelligent even at that stage, so a simple trap wouldn't fool them. Chapel asks how they were supposed to hunt them, and Uhura suggests that they had to make the Gorn come to them. Both La'an and Spock concur, the latter calling it "very logical". La'an knows the Gorn are drawn to aggressive behavior, and can't resist a challenge. "Great, now we're bait," Kirk grumbles. The Gorn avoid the cold, so La'an suggests using the environmental controls to draw the Gorn to where they wanted them. Pike approves, and puts the crew to work.

Pike and M'Benga, the latter with Oriana on his back, enter the Peregrine's bridge, the doctor depositing his patient in the captain's chair. Pike uses his command codes to take control of the ship's systems, where he would "quarterback" the operation from the bridge. The temperature begins to decrease across the ship, except for a "warm oasis" in one of the cargo bays, where Spock and Hemmer are waiting. Spock asks if Hemmer is okay with what he must do. Hemmer is emphatic that he will not be the one to kill the Gorn, but will do what he must to protect the lives of the crew. Elsewhere, Chapel asks if La'an is alright, and the security chief replies there was nothing else she wanted to do than fight against the Gorn. In a corridor near the transporter room, Uhura reports "game on", as one of the Gorn spots her. She fires off a shot to attract its attention and breaks into a run. Pike monitors her progress, and blasts cold air into the transporter room, just as Kirk seals the door. Kirk remarks how Uhura really was "good at everything" as they retreat.

Pike detects it going into the vent system, and warns Spock, who is armed with Buckley's stun

stick. He lets loose several bursts to try and get its attention, but it does not respond. La'an urges him to "make it angry". He thinks of seeing Duke being pulled screaming down the corridor. "The rage in my thoughts, I let into my heart," he intones to himself, then begins shouting in fury as he blasts through the vent coverings to get its attention. Pike picks up the sound of two of them, and Hemmer warns that they were trying to box Spock in. Blinded by rage, Spock is pulled inside before the door is closed and grabs Kirk by the collar, before returning to lucidity. Trapped, the two Gorn begin turning on each other. Once they're done, La'an tells them, only one, the alpha, will be left; once it was dead, they could go home. She tells Hemmer she is coming his way, and steps back into the corridor.

Tossing aside her phaser, La'an begins shouting a challenge to the Gorn, saying she was unarmed, and demanding that it come out and fight her. The Gorn begins charging at her, and La'an breaks off running towards the cargo bay. Hemmer has secured himself in one of the cargo pods, while La'an leaps into another and closes the hatch. As the Gorn tries to break through the glass door, she shouts at Hemmer to act, and the chief engineer activates the environmental protocol, blasting the Gorn with super-cold air.

La'an emerges from the ice-encased pod and finds the Gorn frozen solid. Screaming in rage, she picks up an iron bar from the deck and smashes the frozen Gorn, killing it. The crew is glad to hear the news that it was over, as Hemmer emerges from the pod a moment later, looking much the worse for wear. La'an realizes it was not over, and so does Hemmer, who says he is going to go outside for a moment. While he was not able to sense them, Hemmer knew his own body well enough, and knows he has been infested with Gorn eggs. La'an knows that the spit that hit him was more than just venom — it was how they reproduced. Chapel calls for Pike to open the door, but the captain is unable to do so; Hemmer has overridden the door controls to prevent anyone from stopping him. M'Benga and Chapel plead with him to let them extract the eggs or slow the growth process, but Hemmer knows it has already started, and they all knew what was coming. Pike also urges him to reconsider, but Hemmer replies that his sacrifice would allow him to preserve the lives of the crew. Spock quietly calls it a "logical conclusion", and Hemmer raises his hand in the Vulcan salute, telling his friend to "live long and prosper". Uhura now adds her voice to those begging him to reconsider. Hemmer offers her one last piece of advice: "Open yourself. Make a home for yourself amongst others, and you will find joy more often than sadness." He tells her not to weep for him, as he's had a good life, but it was time for him to go.

As they are all forced to watch, Hemmer steps outside of the cargo bay's force field, reveling one last time in the familiar cold. "Just like Andoria," he says, as he turns... and then steps backward off the edge, down into the chasm.

Later, the Enterprise leaves orbit of Valeo Beta V, the battered Peregrine in tow, as a memorial service is held for the three lost crewmen. Ortega remarks on how she hated funerals, and that if Hemmer were there, he would remind them it was a celebration: "Exalt the fallen, and commit them to the cosmos." Then he would have scolded Ortega for pushing the engines too hard, and she would call him a "blue meanie", and they'd laugh... and it wouldn't have felt like a funeral. She calls him the best engineer she ever served with. Uhura admits she never told Hemmer this, but he reminded her of her father, always pushing her to see things from a new perspective. As she speaks, Chapel sees Spock's hands clenching into fists, trying to control his emotions. "The people you love the most can cause you the most pain, but it's the people you love that can mend your heart when you feel broken," Uhura says, adding that this was what Hemmer's purpose was: to fix what was broken... and he did. Spock abruptly leaves, and Chapel follows.

Chapel sees Spock punch one of the walls of the corridor, badly denting it. When she tries to understand what was wrong, he warns her not to follow him, and when she tries to stop him, he grasps her wrist before realizing what he was doing. He admits he has let out his rage and pain, and cannot control it, saying his mind was weak. Chapel disagrees, saying it did not make him weak, it made him Human, as she hugs him. They look into one another's eyes for a moment, before Spock walks away.

In Pike's quarters, La'an reports she has found a lead on Oriana's family, one that she admits is weak, and is also outside Federation space. Pike can see she wants to pursue it anyway. La'an admits she knows what it was like to be alone, and wants to help if there was anyone out there looking for her. Pike warns her that a mission like that took time. La'an formally requests a leave of absence, saying he could decommission her if he wanted, but she felt she had to go where the

clues took her. Pike not-quite-jokingly asks if it would have made a difference if he said no, but assures her he will square it with Starfleet. Regardless of how long it took, however, he asks her to return. She addresses him first by rank, then as "Chris", before thanking him for everything.

Uhura takes one last look around the bridge, her eyes lingering for a moment on the communications station.

A Quality of Mercy

Season 1

Episode Number: 10

Season Episode: 10

Originally aired: Thursday July 07, 2022
Writer: Henry Alonso Myers, Akiva Goldsman
Director: Chris Fisher
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Christina Chong (La'an Noonien-Singh), Ethan Peck (Spock), Jess Bush (Christine Chapel), Babs Olusanmokin (Dr. M'Benga), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Celia Rose Gooding (Nyota Uhura), Bruce Horak (Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Paul Wesley (James T. Kirk), Dan Jeannotte (Lieutenant George Samuel "Sam" Kirk), Melanie Scrofano (Captain Batel), André Dae Kim (Transporter Chief Kyle), Rong Fu (Lieutenant Commander Jenna Mitchell), Matthew MacFadzean (Romulan Commander), Carolyn Scott (Praetor), Matthew Wolf (Engineer), Mathieu Bourassa (Romulan Subcommander), Megha Sandhu (Bride), Chris River (Maat Al-Salah), Ali Hassan (Commander Hansen Al-Salah), Ian Rayburn (Groom), Ana Shepherd (Ferragut Crew Member)
Summary: Just as Captain Pike thinks he's figured out how to escape his fate, he's visited by his future self, who shows him the consequences of his actions.



"Captain's log, stardate 1457.9. The Enterprise is on the edge of the Neutral Zone, a narrow band of space separating the Romulan Empire from the Federation. A remnant of a treaty of a hundred years ago, when a destructive war was waged between our two cultures. Enterprise and the USS Cayuga are here to help the outposts that guard the Neutral Zone with

much needed retrofitting and supplies."

In his quarters aboard the Enterprise, Captain Pike is hard at work over the stove as Captain Batel enters, noting that they had had spaghetti the previous evening. Pike corrects her by saying he was making pasta mama, saying that by adding eggs and Parmesan cheese, lightly sautéed, one could turn leftovers into something new. Batel compares this idea to what they're doing with the outposts, and Pike considers that "not as tasty". Batel has heard rumors that the Romulans are developing new weapons, but Pike dismisses them as "bogeymen"; no one had ever seen a Romulan, or even knew what they looked like, yet they got blamed for events along the Neutral Zone. "Some actually their fault," Batel replies, before commenting that she thinks she missed the beard Pike had worn the last time they met. Pike thinks it belonged to a "different era of captain", but Batel had thought that was what he was going for, a "man out of time". She asks how he was holding up, and he remembers "somebody" told him he had better places to be, so he was trying to be there. When she asks how that was working, he replies simply, "You tell me." As

much as she loved his being "mysterious", she had a "date" on the far side of the Neutral Zone; when he asks who with, she clarifies it was "not that kind of date". He tells her he was making osso bucco the following week. Batel admits she always looked forward to what the "Chris of tomorrow" would be, beard or no beard, and asks him to surprise her, before leaving to return to her ship.

In the conference room, Pike, Una, and Spock meet with Commander Hansen Al-Salah of Outpost 4, who reminds them that the outposts were on their own that far from the core worlds, and asks how they intended to handle their supply chain problems. Una explains that under the proposed retrofit directive, each outpost would receive a state-of-the-art matter synthesizer that would create whatever they needed using the materials of the asteroids the outposts were built on. Spock adds they would also receive a full compliment of automated mining craft. When Pike asks what he thinks of it, Hansen answers that it was all he had asked for for the past five years. The door opens to reveal a young boy who was excited to meet Captain Pike. Hansen explains that his son Maat dreamed about joining Starfleet. On hearing the boy's name, Pike suddenly freezes, not hearing Maat's question about feeling the vibrations of the ship while at warp... then rises and quietly excuses himself. Hansen quickly apologizes for his son being so excited, but Pike assures him it was fine, saying he is feeling unwell, and that Una and Spock could handle what he needed.

As he walks back towards his quarters, Pike is almost in a daze, as he hears the sounds of the future he witnessed on Boreth in his mind, so much so that he almost doesn't hear Una calling to him until she was right next to him. She remembers that Maat was one of the names he mentioned, and Pike admits he hadn't expected it. He knows that two cadets will die in the accident that will cripple him, and Maat was one of them. Una assures him he does not need to face this alone, and asks what he will do. He is not sure, but is determined to do something, as he enters his cabin.

Looking over the list of the names — children in the present, cadets in the future — Pike brings up Maat's picture, showing the boy as having been born on the outpost in 2248, and his achievements in science and sports. Pike begins to dictate a letter addressed to Maat, saying he was gratified to see he was interested in Starfleet, but believes he should know something about the future, the last word almost a question. "You'll figure out how to say it," a voice says behind him. "Trust me." Pike quickly turns, demanding to know who the stranger is. "Thought that would have been obvious," the other replies — revealed to be an aged version of Pike himself, wearing a Starfleet uniform from years in the future, with the insignia of a rear admiral. "I'm you."

Admiral Pike walks over to the counter and picks up one of the knives, apologizing to his younger self, saying the room brought back a lot of memories. Captain Pike begins to ask if it was some kind of joke; Admiral Pike finishes the sentence, and says it wasn't. The captain then begins to ask how he could believe it was actually him (the sentence again finished by the admiral). "You ever gonna let me get a word in edgewise?" Captain Pike asks irritably; Admiral Pike replies that he knew he was going to say that as well. Captain Pike has served long enough to know not to take the word of someone who just shows up in his cabin and claims to be his future self. Admiral Pike proves who he is by mentioning that Pike's first pony was named Sir-Neighs-a-Lot, he broke his leg in a rainstorm, and his parents had to put him down; the young Pike cried for a week afterward. Admiral Pike asks if he ever told anyone that, and Captain Pike makes clear he didn't, because it's hard to give a tragic backstory with a silly name (the latter part of the sentence being completed by the admiral again, who apologizes).

Admiral Pike gets to the point, saying that the letter Captain Pike was about to write was going to wreck the future. When Captain Pike asks how and why, the admiral lays out the facts again: Two cadets would die in that accident in seven years' time, and Maat would be one of them. Captain Pike was trying to figure out how to save both the cadets and himself, and the admiral reveals that he would do so — or rather, they would do so. He would write to all the cadets, telling them not to be there on that day, but like with all "time-bending stuff", it would have unforeseen consequences. Captain Pike doesn't see how saving the cadets and himself could be bad, seeing his future self there as being proof that he could pull it off. Admiral Pike agrees, and that was the problem. He points out that causality was complex, and that the letter to Maat was the first domino in a chain reaction of events that would lead to catastrophic results, altering the future in ways that they never intended to change. Captain Pike thinks his future self sounds like the

Klingon monks from Boreth. "Who do you think sent me?" the admiral replies, adding that they had given him something to show his past self. He opens a small box, containing a time crystal, saying it would show Captain Pike the effects of changing his fate. The admiral grimly tells his past self that this was serious, "end of the world stuff", but he knows that the man he was would not put his own fate above the fate of the galaxy... which was how he convinced the Klingons to let him show his past self instead. When Captain Pike asks instead of what, Admiral Pike reminds him how Klingons preferred to solve their problems with a *bat'leth*, meaning they would kill Pike to preserve the timeline. Captain Pike hesitates, remembering his past experience with a time crystal vision, but reaches out and touches the crystal.

As the world reshapes around him, Pike suddenly finds himself elsewhere aboard the *Enterprise*, officiating at a wedding. Wrongfooted, he asks where he was in the ceremony, and the bride reminds him about what he had been saying about the tradition of captains officiating over weddings since the time of seafaring on Earth. Trying to get into the role, but realizing he does not know the names of the two crewmen in front of him, Pike is grateful to be saved by the sound of the computer signaling red alert. Spock then calls from the bridge, identifying himself as "Number One" to Pike's confusion, before reporting that Outpost 4 was under attack by "a space vessel, identity unknown". Pike acknowledges, and heads to the bridge.

Pike arrives on the familiar but still different bridge, asking for a status update. Spock tells him that Lieutenant Uhura can brief him further. Pike sees some familiar faces — Mitchell and Ortega at the helm — but still appears somewhat bewildered, as Uhura reports Outpost Four reporting the attack before the message terminated. Trying to adjust to the situation, Pike asks for updates from Outpost 2 or Outpost 3. Uhura reports that Two has not responded to hails, and Three has also gone silent. Ortega reports they were eight minutes out from Outpost 4. Pike asks if the outpost identified the attacker, but Uhura reports no identification. Ortega guesses it was the same attacker for all of them: the Romulans. Pike muses for a moment, saying they should not make guesses just yet, as he would like to avoid a war if possible. He asks to be alerted when they were two minutes out, and asks Spock to join him in the ready room.

Pike discovers the year is 2266, seven years from the present he knows. Spock thinks this to be a Human joke, but Pike makes clear he is serious, calling it "time crystal stuff". Approaching it logically, Spock believes time travel unlikely, and thinks it more likely that Pike is compromised mentally, and as first officer it was his duty to assume command. Pike assures him he is not mentally compromised, and asks what the logical solution would be in that case. As Spock is about to suggest going to sickbay, Pike proposes a mind meld to prove his sincerity. Spock kneels in front of his captain, and begins the meld. He sees the accident that should have crippled Pike, and is stunned by the realization. Calling his captain "Chris" (something he did not do in Pike's present), Spock tells him he carries the burden of a terrible future, and reveals the accident in question occurred six months earlier. There were no cadets to save, and no one on the ship was even injured. Pike asks for Spock's help, believing he was sent to that moment in time for a reason. Spock posits that since the accident never occurred, Pike would remain captain of the *Enterprise* at a crucial moment in the ship's history. In the "prime timeline", some other captain would have commanded things differently, so Spock urges Pike not to command any differently than he normally would. Pike had thought the whole idea was to prevent a terrible future, but Spock believes they had to discover why the future Pike believed this to be a worse future. "So the only way to discover the terrible future is to live it," Pike sums up grimly.

The *Enterprise* arrives at the broken remains of Outpost 4, debris scattered all around. Ortega holds position just outside weapons range. Spock detects only debris, no sign of any attacking ship. Pike orders him to triple-check before asking Uhura if there were any ships in range in case they needed backup. Uhura reports the *USS Farragut* is closest, a couple hours away, adding that it was La'an's ship. Pike is slightly surprised at this, but covers by saying he had forgotten. Just then, Uhura receives an audio-only hail from Hansen at Outpost 4. This also surprises the captain, who had only spoken to the commander what felt like mere moments ago, but he asks for a status update. Hansen reports that Outposts 2, 3, and 8 were gone, destroyed by an unknown weapon. The transmission is interrupted by static in places, but the commander goes on to report that the outposts' deflector shields were at maximum, and that they were hit by "enormous power", and the first attack blew out their shields, worrying about what will happen if they attack again with their shields gone. Pike asks who or what attacked, but Hansen could not identify them, as it happened so fast, and the attacker had disappeared somehow. He switches

to visual, showing the wreckage of his command post a mile beneath the solid iron asteroid, caused by the attacker's weapon. Pike asks if Maat was there with him. "No, thank God," Hansen replies. Pike asks what he could tell about the attacker. Hansen reports no identity, though he believes the weapon was some kind of high-energy plasma. Then the ship disappeared, but he is sure it is still nearby. Suddenly, his sensors detect movement nearby, and switches to the sensor feed. The attacker is a Romulan Bird-of-Prey, which appears for just a moment before firing off its plasma torpedo. The impact throws Hansen back in a burst of fire, before the asteroid itself shudders and explodes. The Bird-of-Prey then disappears again. Spock finds it interesting how they appeared just for a moment, perhaps necessary to use weapons. Ortega insists they engage them, but Pike points out they had nothing to follow. Spock attempts to analyze the ship's movement patterns.

Mitchell then reports a warp signature incoming, with Uhura adding that they were being hailed by the Farragut, specifically by her captain, James T. Kirk. Pike is surprised to recognize him as Sam Kirk's brother, before he orders the channel open. Kirk greets his fellow captain and offers assistance, saying the Farragut had received Outpost 4's distress call and pushed warp nine as long as they safely could. He asks if they knew who the attacker was. Ortega pipes up that they had a pretty good idea, but Pike firmly responds that they were attempting to determine conclusively. Spock offers a potential lead, mentioning that the ship has some kind of cloaking device, but still has a noticeable gravitational signature. Kirk asks if it can be tracked, and Spock replies that theoretically, they could determine its approximate location by detecting the microlensing of background stars. Pike asks where the intruder was now. Spock brings up the approximate location, saying they were moving at a "very leisurely maneuver", theorizing that since they had to decloak to fire, the cloaking device must also affect their sensors, meaning (as Kirk puts it) that not only could they not see the attacker, the attacker could not see them either. Spock projects its course as 111 mark 14, the exact heading a Romulan vessel would take back towards the Neutral Zone, and home. Ortega thinks it obvious that the attackers are the Romulans, and they had to be taken out. Pike reminds her that Starfleet is clear about breaching the Neutral Zone, as it would be an act of war. Ortega asks if destroying three Earth outposts was not also an act of war. Pike counters that if they attack the Romulans without authorization, the Federation would consider them expendable. Kirk agrees with Pike, and offers another option: they could shadow the ship on a parallel course. If the Enterprise and the Farragut matched the Romulans move for move, the Romulans might consider them a reflection. Pike concurs, and orders Uhura to contact Starfleet to ask for permission to engage, before telling Kirk they would talk later. Once the channel closes, Pike tells Spock to have Sam Kirk come up to his ready room.

Sam asks if they were "off the record"; at Pike's nod, he acknowledges that Jim was always ahead of his class, and he was smart and highly skilled, but not above relying on charm or even luck. Pike calls him a "wild card". "A whole deck of 'em," Sam confirms, saying that Jim didn't like to take the path everyone else did, and he didn't like to lose. Pike wonders if they should be worried he would start a war. Sam admits he considers Jim a "huge pain in the ass", but he is also as fine a captain as Starfleet has, even if he bends the rules all the time. Spock then calls Pike back to the bridge, as there was something he should see.

Uhura has detected a signal on an unused EM frequency coming from the comet Icarus IV, directly ahead of them. It was encoded, and Spock was attempting to decipher, but she believes it to be from the enemy ship. Spock reports the transmission was cut off, but they were able to make a copy, which he believes is the feed from the enemy bridge. Ortega eagerly thinks this will mean they will find out what the Romulans look like. Pike has Spock put the transmission on screen. An image of the Romulan commander appears on screen, showing him to have pointed ears similar to Vulcans. All eyes on the bridge suddenly turn to Spock, most looking stunned, and Ortega looking somewhat accusatory. Spock's only reaction is a raised eyebrow.

As the Enterprise and the Farragut approach the comet, Captain Kirk beams aboard the Enterprise, where he is greeted in the transporter room by Pike and Sam. He hugs his older brother, before remarking on "quite the ship" they had there, something Sam translates as jealousy.

In the conference room, Pike notes the silence, and points out they would not get out of the problem by not talking about it. Ortega agrees, thinking Spock should explain himself. Spock assures her he was as surprised by the Romulans' appearance as she was. Kirk agrees that it did seem suspicious — not the similarity, but the fact they would reveal it now. The Romulans knew the Vulcans and Humans were long-time allies, so perhaps they allowed the Starfleet ships

to see the transmission in order to sow discord. Even ignoring the "pointy-eared elephant" in the room, Ortega also points out they were about to lose their prey. Mitchell reports the Romulans would return to the Neutral Zone within an hour. Kirk does not think they could wait, and they had to make a choice there and now. Spock reminds them of the power of the Romulan plasma torpedo, and the weapon in conjunction with their cloak gave them a tactical advantage, even against their ships working in tandem. Dr. M'Benga asks what exactly they would be working in tandem for — to destroy the Romulan ship? If they were lucky enough to do that, wasn't that technically an act of war? Ortega quietly reminds him that the Romulans started it, but M'Benga counters that they were not in a schoolyard; billions of lives were at stake. Pike assures them all that he wanted to hear their opinions. M'Benga is firmly against war. Ortega agrees, but that means destroying the Romulans. Kirk wonders what would happen if the attacker returned to Romulus to report to their leaders that the Federation wouldn't fight back, saying he leans towards attack. If they allowed the Romulans to destroy their outposts without repercussions, they ran the risk of war. Pike remains sure there was another way forward. To Pike's surprise, Spock also believes they should attack. If the Romulans were an offshoot of Vulcans, and he believes they are, then attacking was their only option. He tells them that Vulcan had its own "aggressive colonizing period", savage even by Human standards. If the Romulans had retained this martial philosophy, then weakness was something they dared not show. Ortega thinks there was hope after all, if she and Spock could agree.

Kirk adds a potential alternative Pike is looking for, asking Spock to project the comet's trajectory, with the Romulans headed for the comet's tail. While they couldn't be spotted while cloaked, particle distortion from going through the tail would reveal their location; both ships would be flanking from either side, penning them in and allowing them to lock on weapons. Pike thinks it a good plan.

"Captain's personal log, stardate 1709.2. Per Captain Kirk's plan, we are mounting a pincer move. Our two ships will slowly drift closer as the Romulans remain unaware. When they pass through the comet's tail, giving us their exact location, we will be in weapons range. Kirk, however, has agreed to my plan to neutralize, not destroy, the Bird-of-Prey, leaving open the possibility of dialogue. And yet, I remain concerned this brash young Starfleet captain follows his own rules. I can't help but wonder: is Kirk the reason I was sent here? If I wasn't here to stop him, would we be led into a war?"

Pike orders Ortega to maintain present course, but be ready; she promises to keep her "foot over the gas", just in case. Spock still detects the Romulans' gravitational distortion. The Farragut is also in position and holding course, Kirk asking to hear the moment the Enterprise spots the Romulans. The two ships pass through the comet's tail... and see nothing. Kirk realizes something is wrong; Spock concurs, as they should have seen the Romulans by now. Suddenly, the Bird-of-Prey decloaks behind the Farragut. Both ships order red alert. As the Bird-of-Prey opens fire on them with its disruptors, Kirk orders attack pattern Tiberius 4, bringing the ship around to open fire on the Romulans. The Bird-of-Prey launches its plasma torpedo, which smashes through the saucer of the Farragut, disabling the ship. Kirk urges the Enterprise to fire phasers to draw the Romulans' attention, but Pike is concerned about hitting the Farragut, as well as being out of range. After a moment, however, he orders Mitchell to fire full phasers. One blast manages to clip the Bird-of-Prey's port nacelle. Pike orders hailing frequencies to try and keep the Romulans' attention. The Bird-of-Prey fires another plasma torpedo, and Pike calls for the crew to brace for impact. The torpedo hits, but not as seriously as to the Farragut; Mitchell reports damage to decks six, seven, and nine, and weapon control was down. Pike wonders how they were alive at all, as the weapon should have destroyed them. Spock speculates the weapon was less effective when fired at long range. Pike then asks for the status of the Farragut. The scans show the ship will lose life support within the next five minutes; Ortega can get to them within thirty seconds. Pike calls Chief Kyle and tells him to warm up the transporters, as they were about to be tested to their upper limits.

Pike heads down to the transporter room, where La'an is leading a group of survivors from the Farragut. She calls for them to clear the pad, as there was one more group coming, before spotting Pike. To his surprise, she hugs him, saying she was glad to see him. Pike didn't remember her being much of a hugger, calling her "lieutenant"; she corrects him by saying she was a commander now. He then asks if she's spoken to Una; La'an looks confused, saying (as if he would know) that Una was not allowed contact. The last group beams aboard, including Captain

Kirk, who demands to speak with Pike.

Alone in Pike's cabin, Kirk vents his frustration: "You flinched. You deliberated and we lost." Pike points out that they fired, and were fired upon, and that was why Kirk was still there. Kirk is struck by the idea that from the start, Pike wanted to cripple rather than destroy the Romulans. Pike coldly warns him not to question his combat readiness simply because they had differing viewpoints. Kirk does not back down, saying that Pike's caution meant not putting everything he had into the punch, which was a good way to lose; the enemy would see that and act accordingly. Pike wonders why all the rage over a second's delay. "Tell me I'm wrong, Captain, and I will back down," Kirk challenges him. Pike acknowledges that Kirk was more willing to take risks than he was, but reminds him that he was saying that on Pike's ship, because he had lost his own. Kirk concedes that point, before adding that he had underestimated the Romulan commander, and would not do so again. Just then, Spock calls them both to the bridge.

Spock was able to get a scan of the Bird-of-Prey before it cloaked. It was trailing trilitium fragments, meaning their power supply was damaged — they would not be able to return to Romulus. Its heading was still taking it back towards the Neutral Zone, but the Enterprise could overtake them. However, the Enterprise's offensive capabilities are limited; the phasers were down, and the torpedo tubes took damage in the attack. Kirk points out the Romulans don't know that, but Pike counters that they would figure it out if the Enterprise pulled up on the Bird-of-Prey's "six" and couldn't fire. Pike orders hailing frequencies, acknowledging that the Romulans had ignored them thus far, but decides to "take a risk". As the channel opens, Pike identifies himself and his ship, saying that their two cultures had been at war for a hundred years, long enough where they didn't even question it. However, he believes they could make a different choice there and now. He offers a temporary ceasefire so that they could talk, for the first time in a century. After the channel closes, Kirk concedes Pike's move was "unexpected". Pike knows the Romulans want to destroy them, but they also wanted to get home, and knowing what the other wanted was key to a successful negotiation — assuming, Kirk points out, they can be negotiated with. They would soon find out: Uhura reports the Romulans are hailing them. "Captain Pike, it is good to make your acquaintance," the Romulan commander greets him.

Pike knows the Romulans attacked the outposts on their side of the Neutral Zone, but also knows that their two cultures had been at war for generations without having been face-to-face. He doesn't know why the Romulans attacked Earth in the past, or what Earth did in retaliation, but knows only that they were still paying a bill written long before either of them were born. Perhaps it was time to reconsider the cost. He believes they had two choices: they could destroy each other with what power they had left, or try something different — try to understand each other. If they didn't, the war between their peoples would continue unabated, and the cost for that was sure: Death. The commander acknowledges that their peoples were indeed different, as in Romulan culture, Pike's words would be considered weakness. He asks what purpose dialogue would serve, save to delay him, or indeed why he should listen to Pike at all. Pike points out that both ships were damaged; the Romulan cloak was unstable, which left them vulnerable to the Enterprise's weapons. Perhaps they had enough power to attack, or even to get back to Romulus without repairs. Conversely, perhaps the Enterprise could marshal its weapons and destroy them before they make it to the Neutral Zone, or even chase them across the border, destroy them, and get out before anyone's the wiser. The commander asks what Pike proposes. Pike offers a "good faith gesture": a two-hour ceasefire, so they could each repair their ships and bury the dead. After a tense moment, the commander agrees.

As the channel closes, Ortegas firmly believes the Romulans could not be trusted, having blasted the Farragut right in front of them. Pike quietly tells her to stand down, but Ortegas protests that they couldn't let the Romulans get away with it. Pike again tells her to stand down, much louder this time, and she meekly acknowledges. As Pike resumes the captain's chair, Spock reports the Romulans have stopped their forward motion. Kirk wonders what they were doing over there. "Hopefully, same thing we are," Pike replies grimly.

Aboard the Bird-of-Prey, the subcommander on the bridge protests against the ceasefire, calling it "Federation weakness", and asking if it was not the Romulan way to attack when given such an advantage. The commander is committed to the ceasefire, and orders all hands to make repairs to the engines, otherwise they would not make it back to Romulus. The subcommander believes they should prioritize repairs to the weapons; the Federation had given them the advantage, and they should use it before the "ridiculous" ceasefire ended. The commander takes

him aside to speak in private, trying to recall if it was the subcommander's fourth mission; the younger officer replies it was his third. The commander recalls serving with the subcommander's uncle Tarqan during the Reman campaign, something the subcommander was aware of; he calls his uncle's death a great victory for Romulus. The commander acknowledges Tarqan's bravery, but calls his commander a fool, forcing them to attack without weapons. He considers Tarqan's death a waste and calls it stupid, saying it made them weaker. Because he is old enough not to care what others think of him, he expresses the belief that pride was not something they could afford. On his ship, they would look at the world clearly, not based on ego. He again calls for engine repairs first, then weapons, before asking if the subcommander was arrogant enough to believe he knew better than his superior. The subcommander replies he is not. The commander thinks this good, as he needs his officers; he does not know if the "peace game" they were playing with the Federation would work, but he had to see it through, thinking it a good thing if they achieved it. "And if not?" the subcommander asks. "Then you'll get your war," the commander replies, before dismissing him back to his station.

In his ready room, Pike offers Spock coffee, looking over a PADD. When Spock replies that he drinks tea rather than coffee, Pike (without looking up) offers him tea instead. Spock declines, causing Pike to chuckle; he is reassured that Spock was still the same even in the future, before lamenting how so much had gone wrong: the loss of Outpost 4, the destruction of the Farragut. Any of those could bring the dark future he was warned about, but he can't help but feel something worse was coming. Spock reminds him that typically, no one can know the future in the moment; one could only follow one's instincts, and hope the truth will present itself. Pike then asks what happened to Una. Spock reveals that she was sent to the Federation penal colony on Salius VI, where she has spent the last seven years. When Pike asks why, Spock mentions "her deception"; he is confused, having thought Pike knew about it years ago. The door chimes, heralding Captain Kirk. Spock leaves to personally supervise repairs on the phaser array. Pike is aware that Kirk wants him to change tack, but (mirroring the Romulan commander's exact words) pride was not something they could afford. Kirk admits he would have wanted to destroy them, but it wasn't his call. Where they were now, he didn't know if the Romulans couldn't be trusted, but he didn't know if they could, either, and neither did Pike. Pike concedes the point. Kirk offers a backup plan, just in case negotiations fail. The two-hour ceasefire gave the Romulans time to repair their ship, but being on the edge of the Neutral Zone, perhaps they could also summon reinforcements. What if the Enterprise did the same? Pike reminds him that they were on the far end of Federation space, and just reaching Starfleet took days; it would be weeks before any help arrived. Kirk counters that the Romulans didn't know that, before asking to borrow a shuttle.

Meanwhile, Spock is in a Jefferies tube, working on the ship's phaser array, before calling out to try it now. An engineer with a Scottish accent confirms that was the circuit the auto-repair was having trouble with, calling it "very fused". Spock reminds him that they had less than two hours to repair the phasers. "I'm an engineer, not a miracle worker, Mr. Spock," the engineer protests.

As they reach the two-hour mark, Pike asks for an update. Mitchell reports engines online, but weapons were still down. Spock reports only that they were "working on it". Uhura calls the two-hour mark, and a tense silence takes hold on the bridge for a moment before Pike orders a channel opened to the Romulan ship. He asks the Romulan commander if his crew has finished repairs; the commander answers by asking if Pike's crew has finished theirs. Conventional wisdom would call for them to resume hostilities, remembering how the commander had said doing anything else was a sign of weakness. However, there was one thing at which Humans were not weak: their willingness to see a partner rather than an enemy, which they considered an act of faith and strength, not a failure of character. He asks if the Romulans had that kind of strength. The commander admits that he too tired of endless war, which leads to a feeling of relief on the bridge. That feeling is soon broken by the arrival of multiple signals from the Romulan side of the Neutral Zone — dozens of Romulan warships coming out of warp.

The commander is unpleasantly surprised by the arrival of the Romulan armada, having not called for them. The subcommander reveals he made them aware of their situation, again expressing his belief the Federation showed weakness, and that it was the Romulan way to strike; since his commander would not, he took matters into his own hands. The commander chastises him for disobeying a direct order, but the subcommander counters that if he had not engaged in

negotiation, he would not have had to. Their mission had been to test the Federation's strength, and they showed that they lacked it, believing they should have destroyed the Enterprise the moment that became clear. The commander sees that the younger officer does not remember a time without war, but he does, asking who would win an endless war with the Federation. The subcommander is confident that the Romulan Empire would prevail, but the commander reminds him that an endless war, by definition, could not be won, lamenting that Pike would not trust his word now. The subcommander thinks that does not matter now, as Pike would soon be dead. The commander gestures to the security officers to take the subcommander off the bridge before turning back to the screen, a look of angry resignation on his face.

Aboard the Enterprise, Uhura reports the Praetor's flagship is hailing them. The female Romulan who appears on screen brusquely informs Pike that she was there to accept his unconditional surrender. "Nice to meet you, too," Pike replies before identifying himself, and asking who he was addressing. She identifies herself as the Praetor, the political leader of the Romulan Empire, and adds it was customary to kneel. Pike replies that as he was not Romulan, he hopes she will forgive him if he doesn't, then expresses confusion; the Enterprise was still on the Federation side of the Neutral Zone, as the Romulan fleet was still on theirs, and yet she demanded his surrender? The Praetor replies that the Enterprise is surrounded, and they had one minute to surrender or be destroyed. "You know, I don't like her," Pike sums up after the channel closes. Mitchell then reports a perimeter alert, dozens of ships incoming... Federation signatures. Captain Kirk hails from the lead ship, offering the "reinforcements" Pike requested; it had been a hundred years since anyone had seen the Romulans, and since they didn't know what Romulan ships looked like, he thought the Romulans might not know what theirs looked like either. He has assembled a fleet of automated mining craft and haulers, not one of them manned, but perhaps the Romulans might consider them a Federation armada. Pike compliments the "sneaky son of a bitch" for his ingenuity. Kirk hopes it's enough to bluff with, and that Pike doesn't get them into a real fight. Pike promises to do his best, before asking Spock for an update. Spock reports they were making progress, but the conduits were badly damaged. Pike urges him to work faster; they would need the phasers soon, or they would not need them at all.

The Praetor hails again, and Pike has Uhura keep a secure line open to Kirk so he can listen in. He asks Kirk if he was ready to sell their deception. "Ready as I'll ever be," the young captain replies. Pike orders the channel opened, revealing his armada of "Delta-class attack ships", and hopes he will not have to use them. The Praetor calls it an "act of unparalleled aggression" on the border of their territory, but Pike calls it a "standard training maneuver" along the border, just like what the Romulans were doing. What was an "act of unparalleled aggression", however, was the attack on their outposts along the Neutral Zone. The Praetor falsely claims ignorance, but Pike transmits the sensor record from Outpost 4 just prior to its destruction. The Praetor smugly observes this, before wordlessly issuing an order. A Romulan ship decloaks and breaks formation — the Bird-of-Prey the Enterprise had been chasing. The Praetor calls it a "culling", saying the commander should not have let himself be caught. Pike orders the channel to the Praetor paused, before hailing the Bird-of-Prey. The commander is pleased to speak to Pike again, assuring him he did not call for the fleet. Pike offers to beam his crew aboard, but the commander replies that it was not their way. He regrets that he met Pike in this way. "You and I are of a kind," he says. "In a different reality, I could have called you friend." Pike asks what purpose it would serve to die in this way, and the commander answers that he and Pike were "creatures of duty". "Just one more duty to perform," he says. He tells Pike not to be upset, as he has accepted his fate, but hopes his sacrifice will end the conflict between them. Returning to his station, the commander and his bridge crew brace themselves as the Romulan armada opens fire, destroying the Bird-of-Prey.

The Praetor hails again, saying that the fleet was stronger now, and she was ready to accept Pike's surrender. Pike asks if that was how she wished to end a hundred years of peace, but she scoffs, asking what peace meant to a Romulan... before thanking Pike for showing just what easy targets the Federation would be. The Romulan fleet begins opening fire, and Pike orders evasive maneuvers, before calling Kirk to return to the ship, as they were preparing to warp out. However, Ortegas reports warp engines are not responding. The drone fleet suddenly moves to engage. Pike realizes Kirk is directing them forward and asks what he was doing. "Covering your escape," Kirk replies, urging him to get the engines repaired. He has positioned the drones between the Romulans and the Enterprise. One of the Romulan ships fires a plasma torpedo which obliterates a drone close to the Enterprise, throwing most of the bridge crew to the deck.

As they gather themselves back to their stations, Mitchell reports Kirk has beamed aboard, and Ortigas adds that engines are ready. "Hit it," Pike orders, and the Enterprise jumps to warp just as a plasma torpedo narrowly misses them. Damage reports come in from all decks, but the worst is yet to come: Uhura is monitoring a Romulan transmission on all subspace channels... they have declared war on the Federation. Mitchell reports that decks five, eleven, twelve, and twenty-two all reported breaches, and weapons control took a direct hit. Pike realizes Spock was in weapons control, and heads into the turbolift to sickbay.

Pike enters sickbay to see the wounded being brought in. Among the dead is the young bride-to-be, her betrothed looking dumbstruck sitting next to her. M'Benga sees him and nods grimly over towards another bed. Spock is grievously injured, his left leg torn off, his face hideously burned. Standing next to him is Nurse Chapel, visibly struggling to maintain her composure as she lists his injuries: massive cerebral trauma, major blood loss, spinal fractures, radiation burns across forty percent of his body. She wasn't sure he would recover from it, but if he did, he will not be the same. The horror of seeing what happened to Spock, knowing what fate had destined for him, affects Pike deeply.

Looking out from his cabin, a drink in his hand, Pike considers what he has seen... as his future self speaks up. He knows what the captain is thinking, as he had thought the same thing — that he traded his fate for Spock's. Admiral Pike warns that it gets worse: The war with the Romulans was still ongoing in the timeline he comes from, with millions dead. Not only did Pike start something that should never have been started, but the one chance for a lasting peace between the Federation and the Romulans in any timeline was lying in a biobed. Everyone liked to think their future is important, and for Pike, it is — just not the way he thinks. Time was complicated, but the Timekeepers have shown Admiral Pike something simple. Every time Pike tries to change his path, Spock dies... and he had things to do, "fate-of-the-galaxy type things". The admiral admits that paths diverge, but he was the result of a path that should never have been taken. Captain Pike thanks him, and the admiral jokingly asks how often people got to give their lives for someone twice in one day. As Admiral Pike opens the box with the time crystal, the door chimes. He chuckles, having remembered something. Captain Pike summons his visitor: Captain Kirk, who asks if he was interrupting something. When Captain Pike turns back, Admiral Pike is gone; he replies that he was "talking to himself", and offers Kirk a drink. As he pours the drinks, Pike thinks it strange, but he feels that he was meant to meet Kirk. Kirk admits to feeling the same thing. He had come down to check on Pike, feeling that he had tried for something better. "Tried and lost," Pike admits, as they clink glasses. Kirk asks if the thought had ever occurred to him that some fights could not be avoided; if he had chased down and destroyed the Bird-of-Prey, the war could have been prevented. "You're a good captain, Jim Kirk," Pike says, adding that the Enterprise would be glad to have him, but laughingly denies when Kirk asks if he was retiring. He asks about the young captain, about where he was from; Kirk replies that he grew up in Iowa, and his father George was first officer on the USS Kelvin.

After Kirk leaves, Pike picks up the time crystal and touches it again, returning to the moment he began writing the letter to Maat... then asks the computer to delete the file.

In the conference room, Pike is reviewing Jim Kirk's file to see what who he was in his present time. Kirk is presently a lieutenant assigned to the Farragut, and his commendations are extensive for one of his age and relatively short service; there is also a mention of being a witness to the massacre on Tarsus IV. The door chimes, heralding Spock. Remembering what he saw in the time crystal vision, Pike expresses how glad he is to see Spock, even though to Spock, he had only seen him moments ago. Spock reminds him of how he suddenly left the briefing, and his reaction to hearing Maat's name, wondering if it pertained to Pike's knowledge of his future. Pike replies only that the universe showed him that some fates were inescapable, and even if he could get out of his, it might just fall to someone else... someone he knew. Spock now sees why Pike was so glad to see him. Spock believes he owes Pike a debt of gratitude, although for precisely what, he did not know. Pike expresses how important Spock is to him, a feeling Spock reciprocates, calling him "Chris" for the first time. Smiling to himself, Pike returns to the bridge, taking the conn back from Una, and looking around his bridge, seeing the familiar people in the familiar places. As he settles back into his chair, Uhura receives a priority message from Starfleet Command; Captain Batel is beaming aboard, and they wanted both Pike and Una to meet her in the transporter room. Una is apprehensive, suspecting what is coming.

Pike greets Batel in the transporter room, having not expected to see her so soon. Batel is

all business, but for the record, she apologizes for what she was about to do. The two security officers who beamed aboard with her move to take Una into custody. Batel informs Pike that under Starfleet code of conduct 587.63, Una is being placed under arrest for violation of the Federation's ban on genetic modifications; she is now known to Starfleet to be an Illyrian. Pike protests, saying (as he had when Una told him) that he didn't care what she was, she was his first officer. He subdues one of the security guards before Una stops him, saying she had known this might happen for years now. Batel assures Pike that she did not ask for this, and she truly was sorry. "So am I," Pike replies before they beam off the ship, "because this isn't over."

Season Two

The Broken Circle

Season 2

Episode Number: 11

Season Episode: 1

Originally aired:	Thursday June 15, 2023
Writer:	Henry Alonso Myers, Akiva Goldsman
Director:	Chris Fisher
Show Stars:	Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokun (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars:	Adrian Holmes (Admiral Robert April), Carol Kane (Pelia), Izad Etemadi (Burly Inspector), Rong Fu (Jenna Mitchell), Emma Ho (Oriana), Andrew Jackson (Captain D'Chok), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer (voice)), Kyle Kass (Kr'Dogh), Noah Lamanna (Chief Jay), Cihang Ma (Livian), Jamillah Ross (Lukata), Samer Salem (Inspector Gilan), Hannah Spear (Jen), Alex Spencer (Greynax), Nicolas Van Burek (Klingon Extremist), Abbas Wahab (Ror'Queg), Laura Wilson (Stell), Russell Yuen (Commodore Tafune), John Marshe (Thug)
Summary:	A distress call from Lt. Noonien-Singh compels Spock to disobey orders and take the Enterprise and its crew into disputed space on a rescue mission.



"Captain's log, stardate 2369.2. Enterprise is in spacedock at Starbase 1. The crew is taking some well-deserved leave while Chief Fleet Inspector Commander Pelia and her team from Operational Support Services are running comprehensive inspections, systems checks and upgrades. I've had my hands full on Enterprise getting everything ready. But even from afar, I

sense a tension here among the brass that I can't pin down. The feeling that something is in the air. But right now, I have a crisis closer to home to deal with."

While the USS Enterprise is undergoing routine maintenance and inspection at Starbase 1, Captain Pike speaks with Una, who is in custody following the revelation that she is Illyrian, in violation of Starfleet's regulations about genetic engineering. They have both attempted to reach out to someone they know who could help Una's case, but have been ignored. Pike suggests going public, as they couldn't ignore her service record, but Una refuses to allow Pike to be brought down for her mistake. Una thinks she will be able to get a plea deal, but Pike is adamant that she cannot resign, considering the loss to the Enterprise, and to him personally, to be "unimaginable". Una reminds him that he had taught her not to start a fight she couldn't win, but Pike retorts that she didn't start the fight, and they would find a way to win it because it was what was right. He intends to reach out to their contact, which would involve a trip of three days

to the other side of the quadrant (two-and-a-half in one of the newer shuttles, Pike adds) that might just result in having a door slammed in his face. Una thinks Pike is being ridiculous, but if it was Una's only chance to fight the charges, he was determined to try.

In his quarters, Pike meets with Spock, who is less than enthused about being made acting captain for the next three days while Pike is on his "personal leave", pointing out they were still short a chief engineer and a chief of security, as well as Una's loss. It was for Una, Pike points out, that he was leaving, and tells Spock to take it easy; he wouldn't even have to leave spacedock. Spock points out the Human expression about "famous last words", but Pike expresses his faith in him. After Pike leaves, Spock goes to sickbay, where Dr. M'Benga's scans show an elevated heart rate and pain in the neck, jaw and lower back — all indicators of stress, something Spock calls "atypical". M'Benga knows that Vulcans suppress their much stronger emotions through cognitive blocks, but since the encounter with the Gorn on Valeo Beta V, Spock had removed those blocks. Offering a Human therapy of sorts, M'Benga hands Spock a Vulcan lute, saying that Humans used music to channel their emotions. As Spock begins to play, his heart rate drops — and then immediately spikes when Nurse Chapel reports for duty. Spock quickly excuses himself. "Fascinating," M'Benga sums up, which Chapel points out was Spock's line. He mentions how his levels elevated when she entered, but she shuts that line down, before explaining she was considering accepting an archaeological medical fellowship. M'Benga worries he will have to replace her, but she cheerfully assures him it was just two months on Vulcan — he wouldn't be rid of her that easily.

On the bridge, Ortega and Mitchell observe the inspectors at work, Mitchell in particular lamenting how there were more inspectors than crew aboard. One inspector criticizes the "highly irregular" layout of the helm, pointing out that the pitch and yaw were reversed from standard. Ortega replies that the standard controls weren't quick enough, and she didn't like getting shot at, so she reversed them. Another inspector approaches Uhura's communications station, and she fends him off; he wants to install a secure comms patch, but it requires a system reboot, which would disable their comms, even the emergency ones. The inspector nonchalantly points out that they were in spacedock, wondering how many hails they would be getting. As if to answer, Uhura's board goes off, and she tells the inspector off as she attends to the call. Her expression soon makes it clear it is not a routine call.

Spock continues to pick at the lute in his quarters when Uhura approaches him; internal communications were down. She has picked up what appears to be a distress call from the Cajitar system, located on the edge of Klingon space — and the signal is coming from La'an. Spock goes to Admiral April, who denies his request to answer it. La'an's message indicated an "anti-Federation threat" on Cajitar IV. April points out that Cajitar was a planet rich in dilithium, and was governed by a painstakingly-negotiated treaty after the Klingon War; the Federation and the Klingon Empire alternated shifts on the world each month, and it was the Klingons' turn at the moment. A Federation starship arriving at this time would be an act of war, and he is not about to risk it for a former member of Starfleet.

Spock meets with the senior officers and explains the situation. Uhura is confident the message is genuine, but M'Benga worries it could be a trap; Mitchell adds that April's orders were clear. Spock asks for their help to get the inspectors off the ship, but does not wish them to be involved in anything they think is wrong; if they wanted to leave, or even report the plan, they were welcome to do so. When Chapel asks what the plan is, Spock replies he thought it obvious: he intends to steal the Enterprise.

In engineering, Mitchell simulates a coolant leak in the intermix chamber to evacuate the crew and the inspectors. But one remains onboard: the chief inspector, Commander Pelia, who goes to the bridge to continue her work. She finds it suspicious that the intermix chamber that she and her team have spent three days inspecting is suddenly having problems. As an engineering specialist, she is familiar with the signs of a warp core breach, teaching on that topic at Starfleet Academy, and a look at the computer allows her to spot Mitchell's simulation. It is clear to her that they intend to steal the Enterprise, and Spock's expression confirms it, as she knows Vulcans are usually incapable of lying. She also knows they do not act without good reason, and asks why he would want to steal the ship. Spock admits he is acting on a hunch. Pelia is amused at the idea of a Vulcan playing a hunch, even more so given that it's the son of Amanda Grayson. Spock is surprised to hear that Pelia knows his mother, but before he can find out more, Pelia tells them if they wanted to steal a starship, they should do it correctly, before asking Ortega if

she could vent plasma from the nacelles. Ortega, wrong-footed, replies she could, but wonders if she should. Spock asks why Pelia would help them, but she says they could either keep talking or simply go. Spock orders Ortega to vent the nacelles.

Alarms on Starbase 1 indicate the Enterprise's "trouble", and Starbase 1 control releases the docking clamps, ordering the ship to clear away from the station. Pelia offers her services as chief engineer for the mission, remarking that it had been a hundred years since she had had engines of her own. Ortega is incredulous at that, but Pelia simply says it would be a "very long story". Uhura is able to peg Pelia's accent, identifying her as a Lanthanite. "Guilty as charged," Pelia replies cheerfully, as she steps into the turbolift.

Starbase 1 tries to hail them, but Spock replies they would have to wait, ordering Ortega to set course for the Cajitar system. Usually there is a phrase used before they go to warp, like Pike's "hit it". Spock thinks for a moment, before saying simply, "I would like the ship to go. Now." The crew is amused as Ortega acknowledges the order, taking the Enterprise to warp.

In the main settlement on Cajitar IV, La'an is engaged in a drinking game with a Klingon named Kr'Dogh. Though revolted by the bloodwine she is chugging, she manages not to show it. Kr'Dogh, however, appears to have trouble holding his liquor, and La'an wins the game. Another Klingon takes Kr'Dogh's seat, and La'an tosses a few credit chips to her, telling her what she really wanted. The Klingon agrees to arrange a meeting with Greynax, but warns he may not want to meet with a Human. La'an asks for the meeting to be arranged that night. As the Klingon leaves, La'an looks up and sees M'Benga.

Meeting with the crew outside the settlement, La'an is surprised that they stole the Enterprise, thinking she would have lost a number of bets on that. Chapel agrees that Vulcans can surprise them. Spock points out her message had been urgent. La'an had left the ship after the Gorn incident on Valeo Beta V to find the parents of Oriana, the girl they had found in the wreckage of the USS Peregrine, and had tracked them to Cajitar. Before the Klingon War, both the Federation and the Empire had used the planet's dilithium much as they did now, but during the war, both sides' need for dilithium to replace their losses made Cajitar's dilithium a highly lucrative commodity. Then peace came, and the Broken Circle, a syndicate made up of former soldiers from both sides, thought this bad for business. They intended to restart the war, and were collecting Federation technology; a few days earlier, an explosion at the dilithium mine caused half the town to become ill from ion exposure, including Oriana's parents. M'Benga knows ion radiation does not occur naturally from dilithium, but is a byproduct of a photon torpedo. He is appalled at the idea of someone wanting to resume the "theater of horror" for profit. Oriana and her parents are in a medical tent. Spock has M'Benga and Chapel go to them, while he and Uhura accompany La'an to meet her prospective buyers for Federation tech.

M'Benga and Chapel take in the grim conditions in the medical tent when they are greeted by Oriana. As they treat Oriana's parents, a Klingon and two Humans enter the tent and spot them. The Klingon notes their technology, and asks if they were medical. M'Benga replies that they were from off-world seeking to trade at market. The Klingon tells them to accompany her and her associates, as they were in need of their services; as if to emphasize what choice they had, the Humans raise their weapons.

Three Klingons approach the rendezvous with La'an, speaking a dialect of Klingonese that Uhura identifies as Kach-Ugh. La'an asks Greynax, the largest of the three, if he was followed. He replies he was, but cut the throats of those following him so they wouldn't anymore. La'an thinks it unwise to leave a body trail, but Greynax points out that it was the Klingons' turn on that "miserable world", and bodies piled up all the time. He asks if she had what was promised, and she opens a case with several Starfleet phasers. She had thought Klingons hated Federation technology, asking why he wanted them; he replies it was not her concern, and points out she had promised two dozen, only seeing about half that. La'an tells him that was all she had. He offers her a third of the agreed-on price, but La'an demands double. He is incensed that she would demand double the price for half the weapons, and asks why he shouldn't just take it from a "tiny woman" like her. In response, La'an pulls a device from her belt and warns him to back off, or she would release the "anti-matter detonation switch" and kill him on the spot. Greynax wonders if she had some Klingon blood in her, and agrees to her price, but asks for more weapons.

Meeting with Spock and Uhura, La'an admits that the "detonation switch" was a ruse. Uhura was able to parse out some of what the Klingons were saying, and whatever they had planned

was scheduled for the next day. She asks if they should call Starfleet, but Spock thinks they need solid proof first, not relishing another call with April without it. He suggests returning to the ship to see what M'Benga and Chapel have found, and calls up to transporter chief Jay. They report a lock on the three of them, but they had lost M'Benga and Chapel's signal an hour earlier.

M'Benga and Chapel are brought into a massive cave, which Chapel thinks the biggest she's ever seen. They both see something that brings them up short: a Federation starship. When Chapel wonders how they got it inside, M'Benga thinks they may have built it. The Klingon who captured them shoves them roughly inside.

M'Benga and Chapel are brought aboard the ship. He begins treating one of the Klingons in sickbay, recognizing that the level of scarring from ion burns would be normally too deep to treat, but the Klingons' genetic redudancies made it easier. Recognizing that he has treated Klingons before, M'Benga's patient, Ror'Queg, demands to know where, or he would cut out the doctor's tongue so he would "spread no more lies". M'Benga replies that years before, he had been stationed on the moon of J'gal, which Ror'Queg believes is surety he was lying, as he would be dead otherwise. M'Benga remembers that after the Battle of ChaKana, there was so much blood in the air that the rain turned red. Ror'Queg is silent as M'Benga finishes his treatment. After the Klingon returns to duty, Chapel approaches M'Benga, concerned. While he admits it was bringing back memories from the Klingon War, he assures her he was in control. Chapel has discovered that the severity of the burns indicates the torpedoes were on the ship. Both realize that the ship could be used as a false flag to attack the Klingons, restarting the war; they had to relay the information to the Enterprise. M'Benga produces a stimulant from his medkit; Chapel worriedly asks if he wanted to go through that again, and M'Benga admits he didn't, but didn't see an option.

Given enhanced reaction time from the stimulant, both fight their way through the decks of the ship, cornering one of the Klingons in the turbolift. M'Benga demands to know what the syndicate was planning, how many there were, and what defenses they had. The Klingon is unimpressed at first, even as M'Benga attempts to beat the information out of him, as he knows the Federation's rules against torture. But M'Benga begins throttling him, forcing Chapel to step in to stop him. The Klingon finally admits there were thirty of them onboard, armed with Federation phasers, pulse rifles, and Klingon disruptors. M'Benga demands to know where the transponder is. The Klingon again prepares to refuse, but seeing the doctor's cold stare, fearfully reveals it was on deck 13. M'Benga punches him into unconsciousness, before he and Chapel leave the lift. Just then, they hear the ship's engines warming up.

Finding the transponder, M'Benga is able to reprogram it to send a simple message, but needs time — as the extremists begin to close on them. Chapel gives him the time he needs, fighting them off long enough for him to send the message. They head into a lower deck through an access panel, seeking a way off the ship. But the stimulant is beginning to wear off, as Chapel is subdued by two Klingons. M'Benga, however, is able to fight his way through by sheer willpower, and Chapel soon breaks free as well. They retreat into the airlock, but as they move to get out, the ship begins to rise.

A Klingon D7 class battle cruiser arrives in system, and Spock orders red alert. Uhura reports no indication that the cruiser has spotted them, all signs pointing to a standard arrival in orbit. Ortegas is confident, having had to hide from Klingons a time or two, that the ship running in low-power mode in a field of interstellar ice and rocks with high iron levels would make them appear to be space debris. La'an hails from the surface on a secure channel, having found no sign of M'Benga or Chapel, and having no further leads from her contacts in the Broken Circle. Just then, the ship rises up and heads into orbit. Mitchell identifies it as a Crossfield-class ship, which would be no match for a Klingon battlecruiser. She also picks up the modified transponder signal, putting out a message in Morse code: "Enterprise, destroy this ship."

Aboard the ship, Chapel asks if the Enterprise picked up their transponder signal, and wonders how long before the extremists breached the airlock. M'Benga estimates five minutes with a laser torch, and less with a grenade. Chapel didn't think they would be so stupid to use a grenade while the ship was in space, but then thinks perhaps they might be. They search the lockers, hoping to find an environmental suit, but only find a helmet and a jetpack. M'Benga intends to use the beacon in the helmet to send a signal, and the attitude thrusters on the pack to get them clear of the ship. Chapel wonders what the point would be, as they would be dead, but M'Benga thinks they would have one minute before freezing to death, and would pass out

after fifteen seconds.

Ortegas nimbly flies the Enterprise through the asteroid field as the rogue Crossfield fires at them. Spock is holding fire as long as possible, believing that M'Benga and Chapel were captured by the extremists and sent the signal, and may possibly still be on the ship. They are soon spotted by the D7, which moves to intercept. Chapel remarks it was a "terrible way to die", and M'Benga tries to say it could be worse, but then thinks not. Spock finally gives the order to fire torpedoes. As he does, M'Benga triggers the airlock, and he and Chapel are vented out into space. Spock looks anguished as the ship is destroyed, but then Uhura picks up the beacon from the EV suit helmet. Spock has them beamed aboard immediately and rushes to the transporter room. M'Benga is conscious, but Chapel is not breathing. Spock administers CPR, begging with Chapel not to die. She awakens, gasping for breath, wiping a tear from Spock's face as she asked why he had to be so "rough". As medics come in to take M'Benga and Chapel to sickbay, Uhura calls from the bridge: the Klingons are hailing them.

Captain D'Chok demands an explanation as to why a Federation starship was hiding in their system. Spock tells him about the rogue ship, a claim D'Chok considers "absurd". He accuses them of destroying the rogue ship to cover their own failure in the face of the Klingons' "superior might". Spock points out that the Klingons' sensors didn't detect them until they fired on the false Federation ship, and points out he could have easily fired on them. D'Chok demands to know why he should trust Spock, who replies that he was a Vulcan and could not lie. D'Chok dismisses the "legend" and thinks he would know a man's truth when he looked into his eyes, face-to-face. Spock accepts, offering to settle the matter over a barrel of bloodwine. D'Chok is surprised that he drinks bloodwine, and thinks he was no "typical" Vulcan. "No, it would seem I am not," Spock agrees.

The two crews meet on the planet below, jovial in spite of the close call. Spock approaches Pelia at the bar nearby. She admits her Klingonese was rusty, but asks if they had said "let your blood scream" — Klingon toast Spock was beginning to learn the meaning of. She thanks him for getting her out of the Academy. Spock, curious, asks if she is really a Lanthanite, and after joking about "personal questions", she confirms she is. Spock admits he has always found her people fascinating, living among Humans on Earth undetected until the 22nd century. Pelia explains that Amanda was the first person she came out to, but says that was a tale for another time. Now, he goes on, she teaches engineering at the Academy. Pelia corrects this to "taught", and finally answers his question of why she went with them: she was bored, and the Enterprise seemed to have a "shortage" of boredom. She might even plan to stay around, and she walks off, laughing. D'Chok brings him back to the table, toasting "the Vulcan who acts nothing like a Vulcan". Oriana reunites with La'an, who tells her to stay out of trouble; Oriana jokes that she will if La'an does. She asks where La'an will go now. Seeing Spock with the Klingons, La'an seems to have made her choice.

Back aboard the Enterprise, April berates Spock for acting against his explicit orders and nearly causing a war. Spock quietly asks the admiral to lower the volume of his voice. April realizes Spock is suffering from a hangover, the result of the peace agreement made with the Klingons, but points out it could easily have gone the other way. Spock did what he thought right, "followed his gut" as the Humans might put it, but will accept what punishment Starfleet deems appropriate. April decides the Klingon hangover is punishment enough, but warns that next time ("and there had better not be a next time," he adds), it would be Spock's commission, and orders him to bring Enterprise home.

Spock checks in on Chapel in sickbay. M'Benga approaches, not having heard Spock come in, and assures him she will be fine. The look on Spock's face shows his inner turmoil, and he admits he has no words to describe how he feels. He spends most of the rest of the voyage in his quarters, playing the lute the doctor gave him.

On Starbase 1, Commodore Tafune thinks April let Spock off too easy, but April points out he may have just helped prevent the Federation from having to defend two fronts at the same time, whether he knows it or not. He considers Spock one of their best, and if "this war" happens, they would need all the people they could get. As he speaks, he looks to his map display, showing a possible object identification near the Galdonterre system: a Gorn attack ship.

Ad Astra Per Aspera

Season 2
Episode Number: 12
Season Episode: 2

Originally aired: Thursday June 22, 2023
Writer: Dana Horgan
Director: Valerie Weiss
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokin (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Yetide Badaki (Neera Ketoul), Adrian Holmes (Admiral Robert April), Melanie Scrofano (Captain Batel), Jim Annan (Una's Father), Anna Claire Beitel (Young Una), Catherine Black (Una's Mother), Eugene Clark (Commander Chiv), Nicky Guadagni (Admiral Javas), Beth Hornby (Guard), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer (voice)), Graeme Somerville (Vice Admiral Pasalk), Iain Stewart (JAG Defender), David Benjamin Tomlinson (Zus Tlaggul), Kimberly-Ann Truong (Illyrian Assistant)
Summary: Commander Una Chin-Riley faces court martial, imprisonment and dishonorable discharge from Starfleet.



Una thinks back to an injury that occurred during her childhood, her parents worried that her Illyrian genetics would be discovered if they went to a hospital. In the present, she is seated across from Captain Batel, who tells her Starfleet is willing to offer a deal: if Una pleads guilty, she will be granted a dishonorable discharge, with no prison time. Una notes the "dishonorable" part, but Batel assures her that it would not result in her exile; she would be a free citizen of the Federation, and Starfleet would seal her

records. She considers it a "good deal" given the evidence, and Una's defender from the Judge Advocate General's office agrees. Una elects to "sidebar" that particular conversation, and Batel gets up to leave and allow Una to speak with her counsel. Una pointedly asks how she can get proper counsel when her defender works for Batel.

Meanwhile, Captain Pike has traveled to a world in the Vaultera Nebula seeking legal aid for Una; the planet's atmosphere is not suitable for Humans, and so he is forced to wear a breathing mask. He seats himself in the office of Counselor Neera Ketoul, whose secretary speaks with her boss about Pike still being there. Afterwards, the secretary turns and tells Pike that the counselor could not see him today, as she was completely booked. Pike replies he can wait. However, his oxygen supply is at two percent, and begins beeping with an alarm; the secretary takes this as evidence that Pike actually can't wait. "Try me," is his response, as the oxygen runs out entirely. The secretary scrambles to get Pike his meeting.

Ketoul adjusts the atmosphere in her office for Pike. He knows that she and her people were Illyrians, and Katoul had thought this fact would grant a measure of privacy. Katoul had known

it was only a matter of time before Una was outed, and that Starfleet would never allow an Illyrian to serve openly, but that was not her problem. Pike isn't sure what happened between the two of them, but points out Una is her friend; Ketoul replies that Una is not her friend, and neither is Pike. Pike knows this is because of her opposition to the Federation's policy. He admits that Starfleet (and he himself) was wrong about Illyrians, explaining about the mission to the abandoned Illyrian colony on Hetemit IX, which wasn't so abandoned. There, he discovered what happens to Illyrians trying to reverse their genetic modifications so that the Federation would accept them. Ketoul sarcastically congratulates him for discovering empathy, and asks him to let her know when the rest of the Federation caught up. Pike reminds her that Starfleet wanted to dismiss Una from the service. Ketoul thinks dishonorable discharge was "getting off easy"; given Starfleet's "draconian" race laws, she should be glad she was not being charged with sedition. Pike is surprised, as the proceedings were sealed, but Ketoul has her ways of getting to the truth to save her clients' lives.

As Ketoul again dismisses Pike from her office, the captain tries another tack, asking about her cases against the Federation: ten in all over two years, overturned or dismissed for insufficient evidence. He has done his research on her as well, and believes her cases to be just. He pleads with her to take Una's case, because if she wins, it would be known across half the quadrant, and it would bring her other cases the attention they needed. Ketoul asks if he was trying to bribe her, but Pike replies he was simply trying to convince her, as well as save an old friend. He hands over the case file, saying she would probably not even break a sweat. Ketoul calls him a "piece of work", and he agrees, but points out she hasn't said no.

Ketoul visits Una in her cell, telling her she knew this would happen eventually. Una is a bit put out that the first words her old friend had to say to her in twenty-five years was essentially "I told you so". Ketoul brushes aside any attempts at small talk or justification, and tells her to go over the short version of the case. Una explains that until two months earlier, her record was spotless, because Starfleet didn't know (and therefore didn't care) about her being Illyrian. But someone turned her in, and now Starfleet was wanting to hide any evidence of an Illyrian climbing the ranks; it would be like she never existed at all. Ketoul bluntly suggests that her "playtime" was over, and she should accept her dismissal and go home. Una refuses, believing that she, that they, should not have to hide anymore. She admits she should have stood up sooner, but she was doing so now. Ketoul decides to inform opposing counsel that the plea deal was rejected, but when Una thanks her, she tells her that she was not doing it for Una, but for herself, and those Illyrians who couldn't or wouldn't hide who they were so they could run away to Starfleet.

Batel is furious as she confronts Pike with Una's rejection, having had to call in all of her favors to get the deal. Pike is emphatic that Una's place is on his bridge doing her job, not in prison. Batel points out they were charged with upholding the law, and Una broke it. "And what if the law is wrong?" Pike angrily asks. Batel assures him she did not ask for this case, and believes she is doing everything she can to help Una, but now the Judge Advocate General is looking into the case.

Una and Ketoul are waiting in Admiral Javas' office for the prosecution to arrive. A moment later, Batel enters, accompanied by Vice Admiral Pasalk. Batel informs Javas that the charges are being amended: in addition to falsifying her records and violating Starfleet's code against genetic modification, Una was now being charged with two counts of sedition, with the recommended penalty being dishonorable dismissal and twenty years imprisonment in a Federation penal colony.

Una is incredulous at the idea of twenty years' imprisonment for lying on an application, but Ketoul pointed out that this was Starfleet's reaction to her rejecting the plea deal. The prosecution's first witness is Admiral April, Una's sponsor at Starfleet Academy. Una thinks this might be good for the case, but Ketoul isn't so sure, thinking Pasalk would not call a friendly witness without some kind of strategy. Una thinks Ketoul should call her to the stand, allowing her to show an Illyrian being a successful Starfleet officer, but Ketoul points out that the prosecution would tear her down, and insists that they should do this her way.

Aboard the USS Enterprise, La'an brings Ketoul to Una's quarters, where she could stay for the duration of the case. Ketoul asks for a copy of the Federation Uniform Code of Justice and Una's service record. La'an stays put for a moment, volunteering to help with the case, pointing out the precedent of *Starfleet v. Wyck*. Ketoul, an experienced civil rights lawyer, knows this

involved "fruit of the poisonous tree", a dismissal of a case on a technicality due to illegally obtained evidence. Ketoul wonders if La'an knows something about that. It seems evident she does, but she asks to cover all the bases first.

In the crew lounge, Pike is going over the case notes when he is approached by Batel. Both are aware that his name is not on the witness list for the defense. Pike knows she would think it a terrible idea, but points out he has known Una the longest out of the entire crew. They had met while she was in the Academy, where he gave a speech (leading Batel to joke about how he disliked "inspiring speeches") about a test mission he had flown. Una had come up to him afterward and pointed out a mistake he had made during re-entry. April had told him that every good captain needed a first officer to tell him when he's wrong. Batel recalls he had told her the same thing, before getting into "professional mode", asking as a prosecutor to a witness when Pike found out Una was an Illyrian. She is making clear that Pike on the witness stand would result in his possibly being charged with conspiracy, and it would jeopardize not only his career, but his entire crew. "No inspiring speeches today," she warns, telling him to let others do the talking if he truly wanted to help Una.

Ortegas and Dr. M'Benga are seated at a nearby table watching Spock speaking with Admiral Pasalk, Ortegas sarcastically playing out a conversation between the two as if they were typical emotionless Vulcans. M'Benga, who has studied on Vulcan, sees the underlying tension: Spock and Pasalk hate each other. A moment later, Spock abruptly rises and approaches, apologizing for his "outburst", and admitting that of his father Sarek's former colleagues, Pasalk brought out "the worst" in him. After Spock leaves, Ortegas and M'Benga struggle not to break down laughing.

On the bridge, La'an approaches Uhura, asking for any communications referencing Una over the past six months... including all ship-wide personal logs. Uhura is aware that personal logs are sealed per regulations unless ordered to be opened by Starfleet Command. La'an tries to make it an order, but Uhura refuses. She recognizes that La'an is trying to help Una, who had been her mentor just like La'an was for Uhura, but points out that following an illegal order could get La'an into trouble, which is not what Una would want.

As the crew watches aboard the Enterprise, Admiral Javos brings the proceedings to order, with the Tellarite Space Command Representative Zus Tlaggul and the Vulcan Starfleet Commander Chiv as her fellow judges in the tribunal. She asks Una if she consents to Batel as prosecuting officer, which she does. The charges are read, formally charging Una with violating Starfleet's code on permanent DNA modification, submitting false information to Starfleet, and two counts of sedition. Una pleads not guilty.

Batel opens the case by citing the precedent for the Federation's ban on genetic engineering: the Eugenics Wars on Earth, which had caused the deaths of tens of millions. Genetic engineering was "nothing short of playing God", and endangers the essence of natural evolution. Ketoul then rises to speak for the defense, pointing out that while it was true that genetic engineering was illegal under Federation law, there were a number of practices that had been legal at one point or another: slavery, apartheid, discrimination against people for their religious beliefs, how they loved, their gender identity, or even the color of their skin. She points out that having a law does not make it just, though she concedes that the Federation may not mean to do harm, and that their experience with genetic modification was indeed horrific. The Federation had built a utopia in the wake of that experience, but in the process, allowed a centuries-old fear to blind them. She pointed out that Una was only on trial here because she had been forced to hide something that made other people uncomfortable, afraid. "If a law is not just, then I ask: how are we to trust those who created that law to serve justice?"

The prosecution calls April to the stand, detailing how Una had served under his command when he was captain of the Enterprise, and how he had been her sponsor at the Academy. Batel asks if that would mean April has an investment in her career, and he agrees it would. She asks if he had known that she had been genetically modified, and he replies he did not. Batel then asks if he would have sponsored Una at the Academy if he had known. April deflects at first, saying Una was the most gifted applicant he had ever met, but when Batel presses, he regretfully admits he wouldn't have.

In her cross-examination, Ketoul asks why April would not have approved Una's application, and April specifically cites Regulation 17, Article 12, barring genetically modified people like Illyrians from serving in Starfleet. Ketoul points out his rank and decorated service, knowing he wouldn't want to risk that for one individual applicant. April stresses it was not personal, and

Ketoul agrees — it was the law. She then asks April to define what General Order One is, earning an objection from the prosecution for relevance. Tluggul overrules, curious about it himself. April explains that General Order One, the Prime Directive, prohibited Starfleet from interfering in the development of other cultures. Ketoul then points out April's violations of the Prime Directive: in 2246, warning the Perricans, a pre-warp civilization, of an apocalyptic meteor shower about to impact their planet; in 2248, sending his science officer to share Federation technology to halt an extinction-level drought on the planet Na'rel, another pre-warp society; and beaming down to the planet Man-us II without his security officer and revealing his starship to the pre-warp Ohawk civilization. Batel continues to object, and this time Javas sustains, reminding Ketoul the witness was not on trial. Ketoul points out that the rules of Starfleet seemed to only apply when a captain deemed that they do. She is relentless in pointing out that April violated Starfleet's very first order on numerous occasions and is hailed as a hero, and yet Una is charged with breaking a law when she had no say in the matter of her own genetic modifications, which were done before she was even born. When she dismisses Starfleet's rules as "flimsy and subjective at best", a visibly angered April rises to his feet, saying that Starfleet captains made judgment calls that saved lives every day, and that the rules Una had violated were there to save lives and prevent genocide; he again emphasizes he would have denied her application if he had known of her genetic modifications. Ketoul thinks that it was fear and prejudice rather than law that motivated his decisions. Chiv reminds Ketoul that it was Una, not April, on trial, and the fact that she could not defend her client did not give her the right to attack the Federation or its officers; he orders the admiral's testimony be stricken.

Aboard the Enterprise, Uhura asks if Ketoul just tried to indict April, and Spock concurs it seemed so. Chapel concedes that was one strategy, and Ortegaz adds it was one that didn't make April look good. La'an wonders how this helps Una. Pike seems to be having buyer's remorse about approaching Ketoul, and quietly leaves. He meets with April in his quarters, admitting that reaching out to Ketoul had been his idea. April thinks very highly of Una, promoting her faster than anyone on the ship, and recommending her for the Starfleet Medal of Gallantry after the Marcel incident in 2248. It was a shame, he adds with a pointed look, that the court never got to hear that.

In her cell, Una confronts Ketoul about her performance in the courtroom. Ketoul's response leads Una to realize that she didn't accept the case to help an old friend, but as a platform to overturn the genetic modification law, and as a soapbox to broadcast her hatred of the Federation. She again tries to ask about their past disagreement, but Ketoul does not engage, saying that she promised she would try to help, and that's what she was doing, before leaving to return to work.

Ketoul calls La'an, Spock, and M'Benga as character witnesses for the defense. La'an and Spock relate their first meetings with Una — her rescue from a Gorn breeding planet, and his first day aboard the Enterprise. Batel points out La'an's descent from Khan Noonien Singh, and asks if La'an ever knew Una was Illyrian. La'an replies that she did not. Batel asks if she ever suspected she was hiding something, and again La'an replies in the negative. M'Benga's only impressions of her were her discretion and empathy, and that she handled matters with great care. Spock admits that he did have a sense Una was hiding something — her affinity for Gilbert and Sullivan musicals. La'an goes on to say that Una had ensured she was taken care of, as she had no family left, and sponsored her application to Starfleet. Ketoul asks if that meant she would not be in Starfleet if not for Una, and La'an is emphatic that she would not even be alive. Moreover, the lives she had saved in her service were also attributable to Una's sponsorship. Batel asks Spock if it would not be logical to apply punishment for the breaking of a law, and Spock agrees it would be, but he considers it illogical for Starfleet to punish itself: He considers Una an extraordinary officer, and her loss would be a blow to the service. M'Benga points out she puts the lives of the crew above her own, Spock calls her a friend, and La'an calls her family.

Aboard the Enterprise, La'an brings Ketoul a copy of the Uniform Code of Justice. As she goes to leave, Ketoul asks about her inquiry into how the prosecution found out about Una. La'an stammers that she hadn't yet, leading Ketoul to guess that La'an suspects she may have let it slip herself. La'an recalls that when she found out Una was Illyrian, she was angry because Una was her friend and had lied to her; she recorded a personal log, and thinks someone got a hold of it. Ketoul suspects there is more to it than that, and La'an admits she is afraid of her own genetic heritage as a descendant of Khan, and fears that she may become dangerous because of

it. Ketoul assures La'an that there was nothing wrong with her, no "hidden monster" inside; that was how others made them feel, looking down on them for so long that they began to look down on themselves. La'an's fears of her genetics were not her own, but drilled into her by others. She stresses La'an was not born a monster, but born with a capacity for actions, good or ill — just like everyone else. Thinking on her suspicion, Ketoul knows that it takes six months and a "boatload of admirals" to subpoena a personal log, and they haven't had nearly that long. Therefore, La'an could not be the source. Ketoul points out that La'an is chief of security, and Una speaks highly of her (something she doesn't do for many people), before asking who she thinks did it. La'an admits she doesn't know, but thinks it was someone who would gain from exposing the truth. Ketoul agrees, and thanks her for her help. La'an wonders why she feels like she's been "hit by a shuttle", which Ketoul takes as a compliment.

As the proceedings resume, Ketoul surprises Una, the court, and the crew by calling Una herself to the stand. She asks how long Una has been in Starfleet, and she replies she has been in service for 25 years, adding that it was all she ever wanted. Ketoul points out she knew she was Illyrian, therefore genetically modified, asking if she did not think she would find herself in this position. Una replies she had been warned, her glance at Ketoul making clear who warned her. When asked why she joined anyway, she replies with the Latin phrase *ad astra per aspera*: "to the stars through hardship". It was the motto of Starfleet before the Federation, something she learned in history classes. She was drawn to that motto because, while she knew it meant they had to endure hardship to reach the stars, she believed it also meant that the stars could deliver one from anything — that while it also satisfied their curiosity and need for exploration, it also promised salvation. Ketoul asks why she would seek salvation, asking about her childhood. Batel, taken in by Una's passionate statement, has her attention returned by Pasalk, objecting to the relevance of Una's childhood history. Ketoul replies she is simply establishing context: If Una was being tried for being Illyrian, then the court had to understand what it meant to be Illyrian. Javas elects to allow it.

Ketoul goes over the basics: Una hailed from an Illyrian colony in the Vaultera Nebula, given provisional Federation membership the year before Una was born, on the condition they cease genetic modifications. As Una admits, some did indeed cease, but for others, like her family, it was their heritage. Living under the Federation, they had to perform their rituals in secret, and when new children were born, they had to seek out friendly doctors to deliver them. Anyone found to be genetically augmented would be arrested. Ketoul asks if it had ever happened to anyone she knew. Una replies it did: A boy named Ivan Ketoul, her best friend's cousin. Some Illyrians had immune systems that caused them to glow, and someone must have seen him. He came home to find the word "Augment" on his door; they had just learned of Augments in school, and opinions on them were "clear". Ketoul asks if anyone defended him, including his family. Una replies that there were some who did, but not enough. Ivan, only ten years old, was arrested, along with his parents.

Ketoul asks how it affected her community. Some families were forced to move to planets outside the Federation, and those who stayed, like Una's family, were persecuted. The anti-augmentation laws, in Una's view, seemed to give people the right to act on their worst impulses — first with insults and denial of service at stores, then attacks. Una recalls stepping in to protect a boy accused of being an Illyrian, and suffered a broken leg. It was a simple fix with modern medicine, but her parents feared taking her to the hospital. The injury grew infected despite her modifications, and she would have died had they not found an Illyrian doctor willing to see them in the middle of the night. Civil unrest became so extreme that the government divided them into two cities, Illyrian and non-Illyrian. Una and her family stayed in the non-Illyrian city, because they could blend in better, but they had to leave their family and friends behind, something she regretted to this day. And yet, Ketoul points out, Una still decided to join Starfleet, even after all that. But given how long she had kept that a secret, she asks, how did Starfleet find out? Though Javas warns Ketoul against badgering her own witness, Ketoul insistently asks: Who turned Una in to Starfleet? Una finally admits that she did so herself. She had grown so sick of living a lie, pretending to be someone she wasn't; she wanted her crew to see her for who she really was, thinking if they did, she would be safe, and Starfleet would finally understand Illyrians better. She remembers a Starfleet crew visited when she was a child, seeing how they were all so different, from so many different planets. She thought that if all those people from different worlds could work side-by-side, she could, too; she could be part of something greater

than herself. "Starfleet is not a perfect organization, but it strives to be," she concludes. "And I believe it could be." She turned herself in because she believed in Starfleet.

As Batel rises to cross-examine, Pasalk stops her and steps in himself, a look of disdain on his face. He concludes that while it was an emotional story, emotions were irrelevant, and facts were not. He asks at what point Pike was aware of her genetically modified status, earning an objection from Katoul, who points out that Una, not her captain, was on trial. Pasalk is undeterred, saying that the incident was evidence of a breakdown of the chain of command aboard the Enterprise, starting with the captain. If Pike was aware of her "fraud" before her arrest and did not notify Starfleet, it was therefore not fraud, but conspiracy. Given that Batel did not elicit testimony from the parties involved, he asks Una again when Pike became aware, reminding her that she was under oath. Una admits that it was on stardate 1224.3 — which meant that for four months, Pike hid her Illyrian heritage from Starfleet.

Pasalk dismisses the defense's case as appealing to emotion, when it was the law that was important. Una was an Illyrian and lied about it, and her actions will also lead to Pike, one of Starfleet's most decorated officers, facing court martial. He considers Una to be "toxic" in both action and inaction, and therefore it was only logical to find her guilty.

Hefting her copy of the Uniform Code of Justice, Ketoul asks Batel if she is familiar with Starfleet Code 8514. Batel replies she is, and Ketoul has her read it for the court. It is Starfleet's code authorizing asylum for those fleeing persecution and fearing for their safety due to their political and religious beliefs... or their biology. Starfleet captains had discretion in authorizing asylum, which was confirmed by a tribunal or designated authority. Ketoul points out Starfleet's tradition of performing rescue missions, of aiding distressed peoples. Una knew this, and chose to seek safety in Starfleet from the hardships she faced just for being born an Illyrian. Through her hardship, she sought the stars, joining Starfleet because she believed it was the only thing that could save her life. Una fulfilled the third requirement by revealing herself to Pike, who exercised his judgment as a Starfleet captain to grant her asylum. All that was needed now was for the tribunal to confirm it, and absolve them both. Ketoul admits she loves the law because a law was not a mirror to society, but an ideal, a beacon to remind people to be their better selves. She agrees with Pasalk's statement that it was about the law, but adds that by his own argument, Code 8514 is also law. She urges the tribunal to look to their better selves to apply the law that favors her with the same dispassion as the law that excludes her. "Years ago, the ideals of Starfleet called a young girl from the far side of the galaxy to service," she concludes. "Find those ideals inside yourself." She urges them to grant Una asylum.

Speaking for the court, Javas begins by saying they could all agree the issue of genetic engineering was a nuanced one, that the laws prohibiting it exist for good reasons, and that regulations must persist to prevent another crisis like the Eugenics Wars. However, the court also believes those reasons cannot treat each individual Augment, Illyrian, or other person with modified DNA the same. "Lines must be drawn, but they must also shift when necessary," she continues, adding that one day Starfleet and the Federation would change its views. For the present, they could only consider the defense's motion, to judge the defendant's specific case. The tribunal elects to grant Una's request for asylum, and she is acquitted of the charges against her.

Aboard the Enterprise, Pike, Batel, Ketoul, and the senior staff are waiting in the transporter room as Una beams aboard. Una half-jokingly accuses Ketoul of setting her up, having found out about her admission, all of it. Ketoul replies that she didn't figure out all of it. Una thanks her for saving her life, and apologizes for not doing more for Illyrians; this was a technicality. But Ketoul thinks it was a start, as she bids farewell in friendship. The crew begins to applaud Ketoul as she steps onto the transporter pad. She points out she was not the biggest fan of Starfleet, but sees a crew proud to serve under an Illyrian commander — and like she said, it was a start.

As Ketoul beams away, La'an welcomes Una back, saying it wasn't the same without her. Una sees everyone gathered, and wonders who's flying the ship with them all there. Ortegás jokes that the ship practically flew itself, before Una orders them back to stations. As the transporter room empties, Pike hugs his first officer, relieved to have her back.

Tomorrow and Tomorrow and Tomorrow

Season 2

Episode Number: 13

Season Episode: 3

Originally aired: Thursday June 29, 2023
Writer: David Reed
Director: Amanda Row
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokun (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Paul Wesley (Captain James T. Kirk), Adelaide Kane (Sera), Carol Kane (Pelias), Dennis Barham (Chess Player #1), Noah Lamanna (Chief Jay), Caeden Lawrence (Security Ensign), David Leyshon (Chess Player #3), Luke Marty (Police Officer), Sean Meldrum (Denobulan Cadet), Brian Quintero (Store Security Guard), Robin Schisler (Woman in Store), Randy Singh (Institute Guard #1), Desmond Sivan (Young Khan), Mish Tam (Chess Player #2), Allison Wilson-Forbes (Agent Ymalay), Christopher Wyllie (Grey-Suited Man)
Summary: La'an travels back in time to 21st-century Earth to prevent an attack which will alter humanity's future history.



"Security officer's log, stardate 1581.2. Nobody told me when I took this assignment just how many friends it would make for me. It is a well-known fact that people love it when you bring them bad news. And quite frankly, who doesn't find having their belongings searched endearing?"

As the USS Enterprise travels to her next mission, La'an conducts her business as chief of security. First, she is forced to step between a Denobulan cadet and transporter chief Jay, the former accusing the latter of using the transporter to steal a ring given to him by his matriarch. Then she informs Spock of an anonymous noise complaint as he practices with his Vulcan lute, and he promises to practice "less vigorously". Finally, she confronts Pelias about the provenance of a number of priceless artworks and artifacts she is bringing aboard, some of which are marked "property of the Archaeology Department". Pelias waves it off by saying she used to work there, and tells La'an to live through the calamities of Human history without becoming a "pack rat" before she judges her, commenting that she maintains a bunker in Vermont in the event the Federation's "no money, socialist utopia thing" turned out to be a "fad". She notes one particular work as a fake — so she suggests La'an tell the Louvre to stop calling her about it. La'an tells her she can take it up with Captain Pike.

Afterward, she engages in a furious sparring match with Dr. M'Benga in the ship's gym. The doctor clearly sees something is on her mind, telling her to ease up before she takes his head off.

He tries to reach her as her physician, but she pointedly replies he's not there as her physician; he amends by saying as her sparring partner, he advises her to talk to her physician. As she rushes at him, M'Benga uses her own energy to hurl her to the floor. He points out that she didn't attend the party for Una in the captain's quarters the previous evening. He can see what whatever she's dealing with alone seems to be "lonely", and it doesn't need to be. La'an doesn't reply, simply saying she would see him the next day.

As she patrols the decks, a strange light catches her eye, followed by a grey-suited Human staggering to the deck. As she demands to know who he is, she sees the bloodstain, and recognizes his injury as being from a bullet rather than a phaser. The grey-suited man says there has been "an attack" in the past, and urges La'an to stop it. He hands her a device from his pocket and tells her to get to the bridge, after which he dies. A wave of energy causes his body to disappear, followed by the klaxons signaling red alert. She makes her way to the bridge, approaching who she assumes is Captain Pike. But the man who turns in the chair is unfamiliar to her — and she to him: "Ma'am, not to be impolite, but who are you, and what the hell are you doing on my ship?"

Uhura reports that the nearby Vulcan ship is hailing them. The captain orders a channel open, identifying himself as James T. Kirk of the "United Earth Fleet ship Enterprise". La'an is surprised to see Spock on the viewer, identifying himself as captain of the Vulcan vessel Sh'Rel, and requesting assistance from the Earth vessel. Vulcan is in a losing war with the Romulan Star Empire, and quotes the Human adage that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend". Kirk replies that it was not the case here, as the UEF had its own problems with Romulus and could not afford to fight a war on two fronts. Spock pleads with him that without their aid, the last of the Vulcan fleet would be destroyed, and their homeworld would be defenseless. Kirk is apologetic, but is firm that there was nothing he could do, before having Uhura close the channel. All eyes then turn to La'an, who suggests she and Kirk should speak in private.

In the conference room, Kirk is incredulous at the idea that La'an is from some kind of alternate timeline, though he admits scientists have said the idea was possible. More likely, he thinks La'an is insane, except there is no record of her in the ship's database. La'an tries to explain about her own Enterprise, and her encounter with the grey-suited man who gave her the device and told her to go to the bridge. She suspects the man wanted Kirk to help her in some way, and points out Starfleet's protocols for dealing with such things. Kirk, however, has never heard of Starfleet, and demands she give the device over to be studied by UEF Command. La'an refuses, and Kirk attempts to take it from her. She activates the device, taking both of them off the ship.

Kirk and La'an materialize in unfamiliar territory, the captain jabbing at the device again trying to activate it, but it does not respond. He suspects it might be broken, but La'an thinks it brought them precisely where they needed to be — to stop the attack the grey-suited man had warned her about. Neither of them have any devices to aid them — no tricorder, communicator, or phaser — so La'an elects to scout ahead. It soon becomes clear they are on Earth; Kirk thinks they are in New York City in the 21st century, but La'an corrects him by pointing out that they were in Toronto, the largest city of what was known as Canada, known for "maple leaves, politeness, poutine". Kirk confesses he has never been to Earth, and that it was nothing like this in his timeline; he had been born in space aboard the USS Iowa, and Earth had first been a battleground, then occupied territory, and was now a ruin. Kirk shivers, wondering if it was always so cold on Earth. La'an is unfazed, saying it was not that bad for Canada, but it would get colder at night, and they had to change clothes before they froze.

La'an and Kirk go into a clothing store and find suitable attire to allow them to blend in, but discover that they still used money in this time, and would be caught if they tried to leave without paying. Kirk asks if La'an is a fast runner, but La'an has a better idea; taking an item from a nearby shelf, she slips it into the bag of a customer, who trips the alarm when she goes to leave. As the security guards take her to the side, La'an and Kirk make their exit. As they dispose of their uniforms, she warns they couldn't do that again, and Kirk suggests getting some money, asking if La'an had any marketable 21st century skills... before he spots something that gives him an idea. He engages in a series of chess matches, and proves to be a formidable player, earning a considerable amount.

As they walk away with their winnings, La'an is surprised, and Kirk can guess why: she doesn't think him a "thinking five steps ahead kind of guy". He admits he used to play with his first officer until she got tired of losing, and has been looking for an opponent ever since. He finds

the three-dimensional chess of his era more challenging, calling the standard two-dimensional board "idiot's chess". He then spots a hot dog stand and buys two, offering one to La'an, who refuses. He tries to make it an order, but she points out she is not part of his "United Earth Fleet". She is concerned with the circumstances, particularly given that they had nothing to go on. Why the two of them, why that place, and why that time? Kirk, however, is momentarily distracted by watching the setting sun; from the videos he saw, Earth was coated in a cloud of ash that wouldn't clear for a thousand years, and people lived on underground lunar colonies with no view of the Sun. He advises her not to skip on a good hot dog if she can help it, and she finally relents. As he takes a bite of his, Kirk enjoys his hot dog and suddenly feels the need to buy another.

That night, set up in a hotel, La'an is unable to sleep, looking out in the living room where Kirk is sleeping on the couch; he awakens when he realizes she is there. She seems to have something on her mind, but is unable to voice it before returning to bed. The following morning, La'an is attempting to put together a list of what she remembers of 21st century Earth history, but Kirk is nonchalant about it. He has a vague understanding of temporal science, knowing that they were at a fork in the road: repairing her timeline would end up destroying his, erasing his entire existence. While Earth is a ruin in his time, Humanity has settled on the Moon, Mars, Venus, and Europa, just to name a few. La'an wonders why he should be content with simply surviving; where she came from, Earth still had sunsets, and Humanity had spread out across dozens of worlds, part of a greater Federation. She concedes that 21st century Earth history was bad in her timeline too, but after First Contact with the Vulcans, Earth became a paradise. She thinks him as being nothing but a soldier in a losing war, when he could be an explorer. Kirk wonders if he even exists in her timeline at all, but La'an knows that he does, having heard stories about him from his brother Sam. Kirk is stunned to hear that Sam is alive in her timeline. As this sinks in, the bridge over Lake Ontario suddenly explodes. La'an realizes this is what the grey-suited man meant by "get to the bridge".

First Responders converge on the scene of the ruined bridge. Arriving, La'an realizes that this scene is familiar to her, and realizes it happened in her timeline. Kirk knows it happened in his, too: the largest suspension bridge ever built, destroyed just after it was complete. This was not the event they were sent to prevent, but La'an sees something from a piece of wreckage that gets her attention. Borrowing a camera from a nearby onlooker, she is able to see for herself. She tells Kirk the damage was from a photonic bomb, a weapon not supposed to be developed on Earth for at least another century. She suspects the bridge collapse may indeed be the work of the assassin they're hunting. The Toronto City Police load the chunk of rubble into a van, and Kirk knows they would not be able to follow on foot. La'an points out that vehicles in that era had private ownership, but Kirk is well aware.

Coming up to the driver of a Dodge Challenger Hellcat, Kirk applies the Vulcan neck pinch to disable him and takes the man's keys. La'an wonders where he learned to do that; Kirk replies he had spent six months in a Denobulan prison with a Vulcan cellmate, cheerfully adding that he could also make plomeek soup in the toilet. Unfamiliar at first with the 21st century vehicle's controls, Kirk eventually gets the hang of it and follows the van through Toronto as snow begins to fall. She urges him to drive slower, and more discreetly; he replies that "discreet" was basically his middle name, even as he drifts through the streets. La'an, however, has seen his personnel file, and remarks that "Tiberius" was probably the "least discreet middle name" she had heard. He defends it by saying it was his grandfather's name. He points out she does not have the most subtle name either—mistakenly referring to her as "La'an Noonian Soong." After correcting him, La'an is silent for a moment as she realizes he doesn't recognize her last name, remarking on her "infamous" lineage.

As they reach a police detour, the van suddenly turns without warning, forcing Kirk to take a "scenic route" through the city to intercept it. The high speed pursuit earns the attention of the police. The van escapes, and the police apprehend Kirk for driving without a license and breaking traffic laws. Kirk protests that his license was in his "other pants". Meanwhile, the photographer from the bombing scene suddenly arrives, streaming the arrest live from her cellular phone as evidence of "police brutality". Just then, the police dispatcher calls for more assistance at the bomb site, and the police let Kirk off with a warning. La'an and Kirk introduce themselves to their rescuer, La'an using the name "Vanessa", while Kirk sticks to "Jim". The photographer, Sera, spoke out because she was also in pursuit of the van with the bombing evidence. It becomes

clear to La'an and Kirk that Sera is some kind of conspiracy theorist, who believes the bridge attack was intended to force Humanity to back off from its plans of international cooperation instead of fighting extraterrestrial threats. Kirk tries to bluff by saying that his "wife" had been abducted. La'an, playing along, says she has, and has seen evidence of advanced technology beyond anything Humans possessed. She looks incredulously at him when Kirk outright asks about the photonic bomb.

As they proceed through the streets, Sera goes on with her belief that an international cabal is responsible for hiding evidence of alien attacks in order to steal their technology. She believes there is a facility somewhere in Toronto where they keep their stolen technology, powered by a cold fusion reactor, and that attacks had been going on for years intended to slow Human advancement. As they stop at a restaurant, La'an is uncertain what to make of Sera, thinking she is "unhinged". Kirk, while indulging a plate of poutine, is more understanding, pointing out that this was an era where Humans thought aliens were science fiction, but Sera knew in her gut they existed, and were not friendly. Sera returns a moment later, bringing her digital tablet, showing pictures of what she had uncovered. Kirk's attention is immediately seized by one picture, captured by an astronomer attempting to get a picture of the International Space Station. She also obtained surveillance footage from a hookah parlor near the bridge explosion site, showing a man in a dark suit waiting nearby, fifteen minutes before the blast... like he knew it was going to happen.

After they part ways, La'an admits to feeling sorry for Sera, being so close to the truth but without the proof she needed. Kirk, however, knows Sera was closer than she thought, pointing out the ship in the picture as a Romulan vessel, a Bird-of-Prey. He recalls what Sera had said about the cold fusion reactor in the city, because in a few days, it would be destroyed in a Romulan first strike that wiped out Toronto. They had to find it first. La'an concedes it would be trivial with a tricorder, and Kirk pointedly agrees that it would be, if someone (i.e. La'an) hadn't brought them back in time without one, and wonders if she learned any engineering courses at the Academy that would help them build one... and an engineer who wouldn't ask questions. Seeing a news report about unseasonable temperatures in Vermont, La'an recalls a conversation she had, and tells Kirk she knows one there.

La'an and Kirk arrive at "The Archaeology Department", an antiques shop. Kirk is unsure what to make of it, but La'an asks him to trust her. Knocking on the door, the sound of breaking glass heralds none other than Pelia, who tells them in a sing-song voice that the store was closed. La'an tells her that they had driven all day, having to bribe a border guard and take several modes of transport to get there. She then surprises Pelia by identifying her by name, adding she was aware of her secret.

La'an knows that Pelia is in fact a Lanthanite, not a Human at all, and that one of the paintings in her collection was in fact stolen from the Louvre. She had thought when Pelia had told her she worked at the "Archaeology Department", it was at a university, but then discovered the antiques shop (Kirk remarking that someone at the Apple Store had taught him to use "DuckDuckGo"). Without giving too much about herself away, La'an tells Pelia that they shared common knowledge that would break most people's perceptions about reality, and that she and her friend were on a mission to protect something "beautiful": the future of Humanity, something Pelia would know was incredibly fragile. Pelia concedes that "brain-melting secrets" were a good enough reason to help someone. But when La'an says she needed an engineer, Pelia is taken aback, remarking that she hadn't taken a math class "since Pythagoras made the crap up", and thought that cold fusion was fiction, like Bigfoot and lasers. Kirk points out that lasers were real, earning another rant from Pelia about how she couldn't keep up with Earth's scientific achievements. Kirk is bemused that this is the person who in two centuries would be the chief engineer of the Enterprise. La'an assures Pelia that they didn't need to understand cold fusion to detect its byproducts — excess heat, neutrons, and tritium. Pelia knows that tritium was used in diver's watches from the 1980s, and may have some in the back. Kirk is convinced that whatever Pelia comes up with is bound to be "insane".

Examining the watches, La'an knows tritium gives off small amounts of radiation, and that the dials of the watch were coated in a reactive material, like phosphor. Kirk also knows tritium has a short half-life, so it would decay. La'an pries off the glass casing covering the watch in her hand, as they both realize that if the reactive materials of the watches were exposed to tritium, the hands would glow. La'an thanks Pelia for her help, thinking her more of an engineer than

she thinks. Pelia is inspired by this, thinking it would be nice to have an honest living — not that any of the items she had were stolen, she adds firmly.

La'an and Kirk return to Toronto, where they have been wandering the streets for hours, with no sign of anything glowing. Kirk wonders why he couldn't have worn the watch, thinking it was a "man's watch"; La'an jokes that he just wanted to be in charge. She admits that if she had been in his place, she would not have gone along with it, and believes it was better with him there. Kirk concedes that if there was one timeline that could be saved, he'd like to live in hers instead, though he knows that was not how temporal mechanics worked. But, La'an wonders, what if he could? Kirk is not so sure, thinking one timeline would not be big enough for two of him, but La'an is serious, wondering if perhaps the device could bring them both back to her timeline. She confesses she finds people "difficult", and admits to being lonely. She has felt the weight of her heritage her entire life, and thinks she is letting that go; it helped that Kirk had never even heard of the "scarlet letter" she had carried her whole life, before explaining about *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne, a story about a woman marked her whole life, like the mark of Cain. When he again shows incomprehension, she is incredulous, before he reveals that he has read Hawthorne and the Old Testament of the Bible. He then kisses her, and after a moment, she returns it. He then points out the hands on her watch were glowing; they were close.

Entering a nearby building, they are certain the reactor is close by, moving out of a sight when a man approaches, using a handprint scanner to access a nearby locked room. Kirk wonders if they should wait for someone to approach or come out, and force their hand onto the scanner, but La'an sees a sign that indicates they might not need to: the Noonien-Singh Institute for Cultural Advancement. Taking a gamble, La'an places her hand on the scanner, and it unlocks the door. She suspects a marker in her DNA grants her access to the building's security.

A gun cocking behind them heralds the arrival of Sera, who now looks deadly serious. She chides herself for taking so long to recognize Kirk. While she was not behind the bridge bombing, everything she had said about slowing Human advancement was true — her people had been doing so for many years. Kirk realizes Sera is a Romulan, and compliments her on the "hell of a job" she did on her disguise. Sera admits she wasn't quite used to the ears, before ordering them to take her inside. Kirk refuses, saying that if she shot them, the building's alarms would go off, and security would seal the building. Sera thinks he's bluffing. "Try me," is Kirk's reply. Sera shoots him in the chest, and he collapses to the floor. As he predicted, the alarms go off. La'an pleads with Kirk to stay with her, but as he dies, he tells her to say hello to Sam for him. Sera concedes it was impulsive on her part, but it was worth it to be the one to kill James T. Kirk. When La'an rushes to attack her, Sera grabs her by the throat and pushes her through the unlocked door.

Sera pushes La'an through the corridors, shooting down any who try to stop her. La'an points out that security would not allow her to get near the reactor now, but Sera has changed the plan. Destroying the reactor was "plan A", and now they were going to "plan B", heading towards the building's genetics labs. As they reach a nearby locked room, La'an is stunned to see the nameplate on the door, as well as child's drawings on the walls. La'an realizes that Sera intends to kill Khan Noonien Singh, and demands to know why. Sera replies, without irony, that a computer simulation told her to, explaining that time was too complex to leave to intuition, so the Romulans had built computers to calculate results of changes in the timeline. She points out that Khan becomes a brutal tyrant, though perhaps Humanity needed the "dark age" he brought in to reach its own enlightenment, or perhaps it was just random. Either way, Khan's death would ensure the Federation would never form, and the Romulans would lose their greatest adversary. Sera rages that entire temporal wars have been fought trying to change these events; she herself arrived in 1992 trying to eliminate Khan, and she has been trapped on Earth for thirty years — and now she is taking her chance. La'an tells Sera her real name, that Khan is her ancestor, and that his legacy was genocide, torture... and La'an herself. Sera points out that the device in La'an's pocket protected her from changes in the timeline; if Khan died now, she could live whatever life she wanted, and never hear Khan's name again.

La'an turns, as if to approach the door... then whirls, disarming Sera, and engaging her in hand-to-hand combat. The Romulan's strength is greater, and she forces La'an's hand onto the scanner. But as the door opens, La'an re-engages, until she is able to get hold of Sera's gun, shooting her twice. Falling to the floor, Sera presses a point on her neck, and her body disintegrates, leaving no trace she was ever there. The device in her pocket activates, which

would allow her to return to her own time... but curiosity sets in, and La'an enters Khan's room, finding drawings of advanced equations and cityscapes on the walls. A fearful voice asks if she was going to kill him, and La'an finds herself face-to-face with her infamous ancestor, Khan Noonien Singh, who appears exactly as he was at that time: a scared child. La'an assures him that she would not hurt him, and asks if he was alone, or if there were others like him. Khan gestures to a photo on the wall of himself and other children. He then asks if she was going to take him away. La'an tells him that it may not make sense to him, then or maybe ever, but he was where he needed to be.

La'an steps outside Khan's room as security approaches, and activates the device, which takes her back to the Enterprise. She returns to the bridge, finding it as familiar as she expected; as La'an had earlier told her to do, Pelia is speaking with Pike and Una about the Louvre's demand for the return of its artifacts, saying the statute of limitations had long run out. Una wonders if there was a statute of limitations on "plundered antiquities". Seeing La'an, Pike wonders if Starfleet Security might want to weigh in on the topic. La'an, somewhat wrong-footed after her recent experience, says she would let this one slide. Pike notes she was out of uniform, and asks if something was wrong. La'an replies nothing was wrong, that she had needed to check on something, and now she had.

As La'an returns to her quarters to change, someone else is there: Agent Ymalay from the Department of Temporal Investigations, a Federation agency monitoring changes in the timeline, who thanks her for her assistance. La'an likely hadn't heard of them because they didn't exist yet in the 23rd century. La'an produces the device given to her by the grey-suited man, whom Ymalay confirms was a DTI agent. She emphasizes that La'an is not to reveal any of what she experienced to anyone, not even Captain Pike. La'an is upset at the idea of having gone back to protect a mass murderer, having had to kill to protect him, and watching a friend die. Ymalay calmly tells her that none of that was supposed to happen at all, and points out that she had protected the timeline in a way no one else could have, asking if she was willing to undo that. La'an admits she wouldn't. Ymalay again thanks her for her assistance, before asking for the device to be returned to her. As she takes it, she examines the time stream, before she departs.

Sitting alone in her quarters for a moment, La'an removes the watch she had taken from Pelia's shop, before moving over to her bed and opening a communication to the USS Farragut — the ship where James T. Kirk was serving as a lieutenant. She identifies herself as the security chief on the Enterprise, leading Kirk to wonder what his brother Sam had done this time. La'an bluffs by saying she was trying to get some biographical data for Sam's security file, saying she was a stickler for keeping an orderly security record. Kirk offers the "real dirt" on Sam if she buys him a drink next time they were at a starbase. After signing off, La'an breaks down in tears.

Among the Lotus Eaters

Season 2

Episode Number: 14

Season Episode: 4

Originally aired: Thursday July 06, 2023
Writer: Kirsten Beyer, Davy Perez
Director: Eduardo Sánchez
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokin (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Reed Birney (Luq), David Huynh (Zac Nguyen), Melanie Scrofano (Captain Batel), Trevor Coll (Afraid Crewmember), Tarek Gader (Shirtless Crewmember), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer (voice)), Noah Lamanna (Chief Jay), Emeka Menakaya (Tiko), Simon Northwood (Rak)
Summary: Returning to a planet that dredges up tragic memories, Captain Pike and his landing party find themselves forgetting everything, including their own identities as he confronts a ghost from his past.



"Captain's personal log, star-date 1630.1. Enterprise is currently assisting the USS Cayuga in a joint mission, charting a new binary system. Captain Batel and I are taking advantage by attempting a perilous maneuver of our own: stealing a little personal time."

As the USS Enterprise and the USS Cayuga conduct a survey of a binary star system, Captain Batel enters Captain Pike's quarters on the Enterprise as he is busy preparing dinner; she asks if it

was his mother's sauce he was preparing, and he confirms by saying anything else would be a "crime against tomatoes". Una calls from the bridge regarding the latest duty reports, and Pike makes clear that he is incommunicado outside of a red alert for the next half-hour. Batel receives a similar interruption relayed by Uhura, the Cayuga requesting a course correction, which she says can wait. Batel has a gift for Pike: An Opelian mariner's keystone she found on Galt, recalling how ancient Opelian captains used it to guide lost sailors home. Just then, Batel receives another interruption: a message from Admiral Eldon that she has been expecting. She takes it on Pike's personal station.

Some time later, Batel returns to the table, looking somewhat upset. Pike can guess why: Batel's expected promotion to commodore has gone to another officer, William Geary. Pike believes that promotion should have been hers, but there were apparently "concerns". Pike wonders if it was about the two of them, and she explains that Admiral Pasalk is "punishing" her for failing to win Una's trial. Pike is worried, calling their long-distance relationship "difficult" (which Batel believes is not the same as "impossible"), and now her connection to him was putting her career

at risk, which she considers an excuse. He suggests that they should "pull it back a little". Batel bitterly calls his timing "perfect", and brusquely leaves to return to her ship. Una calls again, this time bearing news from Starfleet Command regarding Rigel VII.

In the ready room, Una explains that they had been to Rigel VII five years earlier on a routine exploration of a remote class M planet. Then they discovered the Kalar, a Bronze Age civilization organized in a caste system, with a formidable warrior class and a secretive ruling class. La'an is curious why the entire mission was only four hours with an emergency evacuation, and Una confirms they hadn't been able to do a proper survey because the landing party "ran into some complications". Pike clarifies that they had been ambushed and lost three people; they had to evacuate to the Vega colony before Spock's injuries made it four. Ortega wonders why they were going back, and Una explains that scans couldn't penetrate the planet's atmosphere, which is why they weren't prepared last time; Starfleet conducted long-range photographic surveys of the planet every couple of years. They had conducted just such a survey a week before, and found the Kalar were using the Starfleet insignia as their own, which meant the original landing party had left something behind. A small strike team would have to go down to the surface to assess the level of cultural contamination, and if possible correct it. Pike remembers that they had gone down in uniform last time, and is not planning on making that mistake again; the mission will be an undercover reconnaissance operation. Once they had their intelligence, they would devise a plan to recover any Starfleet tech they could find.

After the others leave, Una notes the Cayuga had left with some haste, and Pike admits he and Batel were taking time apart. Una points out the "thing" he does, panicking if people got too close to him. Pike denies it, then seems uncertain. Una thinks Batel is a good fit for him, but Pike tries to wave it off by talking about his responsibilities as a command officer. Una gently chides him, saying everyone needed some joy in their lives, even a captain. They then turn their attention to their mission, Pike wondering if he could have done something different last time, taking responsibility for the situation since he had led the landing party. Una thinks it would not be a problem if they recused themselves from the matter if it bothered him, but Pike points out that Starfleet Command gave them the mission as a courtesy, and a way to remind them of what they already knew: "Enterprise needs to clean up its own mess."

Ortega dresses up in Kalar clothing to join the landing party with La'an and Dr. M'Benga. La'an is incredulous that Ortega is actually wearing the hat as well, which Ortega considers "supreme", part of "recon 101". The doctor looks amused at the banter, as they catch up to Pike (also in Kalar garb) and Spock (who is not) in the corridor. Spock reports on the Stecora debris field they recorded on their previous visit, which appears to be descending, intersecting multiple points along the Enterprise's orbital plane. Ortega asks what the debris is from, and Spock thinks it likely an impact between two large celestial bodies that orbited Rigel VII centuries before. La'an asks if he could have just said "two moons", and Spock replies he could have, but that would be leaping to a conclusion. As Pike hands Ortega the PADD showing the debris field, he is apologetic, saying Ortega will have to pilot Enterprise by hand. Ortega reviews the data, seeing she will need make manual adjustments every twenty minutes, or "lights out, Enterprise". But if she's staying on the ship, she asks, who would pilot the shuttle? Pike raises his hand in reply, saying while he may not be Ortega, he did used to be a test pilot, and promises Ortega will get a spot on the next landing party. As Pike enters the shuttlebay, Ortega glares at Spock before handing him the PADD. Spock tries to explain that he was not responsible for the data, but Ortega shushes him, saying he needed to learn when to leave people alone. He apologizes, saying that he was working on that. Annoyed at the lost opportunity, Ortega stalks off.

Pike pilots the shuttle through the atmosphere, seeing the atmospheric disturbances caused by impacts thousands of years before. M'Benga thinks such an impact would have wiped out half the planet, and Pike agrees it probably did, but the settlement they're headed to was a hemisphere away. The doctor points out they would have to trek twenty kilometers through hostile territory, and Pike jokingly notes he had read the briefing. As he lands the shuttle, Pike also points out that they could not risk further contamination, and so would not bring any standard gear, but rather items more suitable to the Kalar's level of development, including a telescope and a compass. Pike points out that he specifically wanted La'an and M'Benga because he knew they could handle themselves in a fight, and the Kalar were fierce warriors. La'an notices M'Benga's expression, asking if he was well; he sarcastically replies that doctors enjoy getting chosen for missions for their combat skills. As she stands up straight, La'an suddenly hears a

ringing in her ears that disorients her; when her head clears, she is outside, walking with Pike and M'Benga. She admits to feeling light-headed, and mentions the ringing. M'Benga believes it may be tinnitus caused by the altitude, and offers to take them back to the shuttle. La'an is surprised when Pike mentions they were six hours out from the shuttle, feeling like they had only just left. Pike asks M'Benga if he believes they should return, but M'Benga sees nothing else wrong besides the momentary confusion, and La'an concurs that they should move forward. They had to find their objective and a place to make camp before nightfall. As La'an walks ahead of them, M'Benga expresses his concern to the captain, saying she had breathed thinner air than this.

As they observe the Kalar fortress, La'an spots the Starfleet delta over the main gate as well, before being disoriented again by the ringing in her ears. She assures Pike it was "just a headache", but Pike wonders if M'Benga was right and they should return to the shuttle at dawn. La'an stops him short when she spots something through the telescope, which she hands to Pike. His look is grim when he sees the two guards at the gate sporting Starfleet phasers. He recalls Spock had been bleeding out as they fought their way back to the shuttle, and admits he hadn't been keeping track of their gear at the time. M'Benga comes running a moment later, saying they had company. Six Kalar warriors approach behind him, and Pike tries a diplomatic approach first, saying they had come "far from the north" and meant no harm. The leader of the party lifts up his phaser, and tells them he knows they were Starfleet. Just then, M'Benga experiences the ringing in his ears as well, and suddenly he is disoriented as well, the confusion clearing as they are brought inside the fortress.

To Pike's shock, they are brought before the Kalar leader... his former yeoman, Zac Nguyen, whom he believed killed on the landing party five years before. Nguyen accuses Pike of leaving him behind, not bothering to check back whether he was alive or not. Pike mentions seeing the Starfleet delta put up in the garden of the fortress, and Nguyen reveals he was wearing his uniform under his Kalar robe. The Kalar adopted the Starfleet delta as their symbol and he became their king, "High Lord Zacarias". Pike knows he is upset about the circumstances, but points out he managed to survive. Nguyen, however, tells him that Rigel VII was not a "normal planet", asking if they had realized how hard it was to think, and mentions the ringing in the ears, getting both La'an and M'Benga's attention. The radiation on the planet affected the brain, starting with the ringing, then one lost stretches of time, experienced heightened senses of fear, and then memory loss. Soon enough, they would become Kalar. Pike pleads with him to come back to the ship with them, but Nguyen feels there was no going back, given how he violated the Prime Directive by arming the locals with Starfleet tech and making himself king; plus, he adds, he would enjoy watching Pike suffer as he had suffered. Pike points out that Enterprise was in orbit and would come for them, but Nguyen counters that by tomorrow, no one would remember, including Pike. He gloats that Rigel VII changed people, and he looked forward to seeing it work its "magic" on the three of them.

Pike is suddenly overcome by the ringing and disorientation, coming to in a cage with M'Benga and La'an. Pike is starting to experience the symptoms Nguyen described, though not nearly to the same degree as the others; La'an is unconscious in the corner of the cage, but when Pike moves to rouse her, she slaps him across the face, telling him to get away from her. She seems unable to even remember her own name. Pike tries to put together what he remembers, thinking the steam vents of the volcano they saw on the way in was the source of the radiation, but eventually he too is confused as to why they were there.

Aboard the Enterprise, Uhura begins hearing the ringing as well, faintly hearing Spock going over the mineral composition of the debris field in orbit, and hears Ortega sarcastically asking if he planned to marry the debris field, before Una asks for a report. Uhura, focusing on her station, replies that she is preparing to send the situation report to the UFP relay, but Una is confused, saying she had ordered that two hours ago. Ortega jokes that this was what happened when one spent their nights translating Tellarite sonnets instead of sleeping. Uhura is completely lost, asking if she actually sent that report. Una orders her to report to sickbay immediately. Uhura agrees, admitting to feeling disoriented. Ortega suggests someone should go with her to make sure she gets there, and Una agrees, sending Ortega along. When Ortega points out about the debris field, Una replies that she flew the Enterprise before Ortega did.

In sickbay, Uhura reports the ringing in her ears, and now a headache. Nurse Chapel looks worriedly at the scans of Uhura's brain, showing major synaptic degradation in the frontal,

parietal, and temporal lobes. She gives Uhura a sedative and tells her to rest. Ortega reports that half an hour earlier, Uhura was fine, but now Chapel's scans show something blocking her neural pathways. Chapel thinks it could be anything — a viral or bacterial infection, or an environmental exposure. Ortega points out that Uhura has been at her post all day, but Chapel thinks it could be a delayed reaction, asking Uhura what she had for breakfast that morning. Uhura, feeling drowsy from the sedative, replies she'd had the same thing she always had, oatmeal. Chapel assures Ortega that as long as it remained isolated to Uhura, they should be fine. But as Ortega heads out, Spock calls from the bridge with a medical emergency: six crewmembers from engineering were reporting acute memory loss. "Definitely not the oatmeal," a groggy Uhura quips.

In the Kalar fortress, the guards open the cage, causing La'an to huddle into the corner. The guard tells them to "move or starve", but all of them simply stare fearfully back. As the guard closes the cage, a man steps forward on their behalf, saying they had had a "rough forgetting". As they wonder why they were in a cage, the man says that they had no totem to guide them, but offers to help them re-center. M'Benga doesn't know him, or indeed any of them, but the man points out that they may have known each other their whole lives, pointing out their colors; Pike's blue clothing means he must work in the stone quarry, like him, while M'Benga's green means he was a woodcutter. He tells them to "follow along", as the Kalar guards didn't like to be kept waiting. Pike looks at the Starfleet delta on the gate as if it had some meaning to him, and asks the man how he was so calm. The man replies that he woke to his "totem" every morning, and urges the landing party to "be in the moment" with him for now.

Pike and La'an are put to work in the quarry, while M'Benga cuts the wood. Pike doesn't like not knowing what was going on, while La'an protests at being forced into labor, but the man says that their work was a "blessing", giving them purpose. He says they had a hard "forgetting". Pike asks if that was sleep, but the man says that sleep was what the Kalar in the palace did; they were Kalar in the field, and they had "forgetting". They didn't forget the deeply-known things — walking, talking, other things deep inside — but they forget other things, like their identities and where they lived. Pike wonders how society could work when they forget everything every night. The man says that the Kalar in the palace didn't forget, but those in the field had "pictures" and each other to guide them. With the "fruit of the gods", they marked themselves, rolling up his sleeve to show the tattoos on his arm, which was how he knew his name was Luq. Pike and La'an both have no "pictures", and Pike looks at his hands, knowing they were not the hands of one who worked in a quarry. He is also wearing the Opelian mariner's keystone that Batel gave him, knowing it was a gift from someone. Luq tells him that emotions can guide them where memories could not. Pike is convinced they do not belong, and that M'Benga had come with them too; he wants to leave to find where they came from. Luq warns that they could chase that feeling and never find it, but the totem tells them to forget before and "live in the moment". The Kalar guards order them back to work. As Luq leaves, Pike points out to La'an that only two guards were left, but no one seems to want to fight back; perhaps they were conditioned. One day they fight, then they forget why, and give up.

The Kalar guards tell Luq to hurry up, and Pike tries to speak on his behalf, saying he was in pain. The guard warns that "field Kalar" don't talk back, and Pike engages the man in a fistfight before knocking him out. The second guard advances, and La'an rushes to his aid with her hammer. She too knocks her opponent out, but not before the guard draws his knife and slashes her across the abdomen. M'Benga rushes to her side to put pressure on the wound. Pike recognizes that he must be a healer, a doctor, and M'Benga thinks he is right, that he knows how to ease her pain. La'an thinks they need to hide, and Luq agrees; more guards will be on their way. Pike doesn't even know where they are, but Luq offers his help, and the three of them follow him.

Back on the Enterprise, Chapel reports on the symptoms to Una, who is also experiencing them herself: tinnitus, migraine, followed by memory loss. A third of the crew is already affected. Spock enters, distributing the personal files on the ship's senior officers to remind them of who they are in case their memory starts to fail. He estimates that within the next hour, they will be unable to man critical stations. Una asks for theories, and Chapel thinks it some kind of exotic radiation. Spock believes that the planet itself is the source, as the symptoms began manifesting after they arrived, and they had not been there as long on their last visit. He suggests pulling the ship away from the planet. Una — though her memory is starting to be spotty — is adamant

that they not strand the landing party, and Spock assures her he does not intend to do so, but he must put the safety of the entire crew first, and asks her permission to alter course. Una agrees, but tells him to stay close: if it was affecting the crew this badly in orbit, she could only imagine how it was affecting the landing party. Returning to the bridge, Spock orders Ortega to take them into the debris field, as its mineral composition would shield them from radioactive isotopes. Ortega asks if this was before or after the debris pulverized them, but chides Spock for being "offensive" when he asks if she thought she couldn't pilot the ship. He then hands her her personnel file in case of forgetting. "I fly the ship," she says, repeating it like a mantra of sorts.

On the surface, Luq brings the landing party to a hut with a sign matching the symbols on his arm, meaning it was his home. They lay La'an on the bed, and she asks for water. M'Benga tells Pike that her wound is deep, and "complex" to treat. Luq tells them they should "let go" and allow her last moments to be serene, earning a protest from La'an, who is not ready for her "last moments" yet. M'Benga can remember that La'an is his friend, and believes he has to try to save her. He worriedly tells them that La'an has begun running a fever. Pike tells Luq that he is not willing to let her die, but Luq calls the forgetting a "blessing", saying that they would not remember the anguish of her passing, forgetting it had happened at all — earning another protest from La'an, who has no intention of dying. Pike asks about the "totem" Luq mentioned, and Luq directs him to the pillar next to which he was standing, which told the story of the Kalar. Their gods had proclaimed there would be two types of Kalar: those who remember to plan their future and record their past, and those who forget to keep the work of the present continuing. Pike finds it "convenient" that some do all the work while others don't, but Luq defends it by saying that the palace Kalar remember so the others could be free — free of the past, no burdens. When asked how the palace Kalar remember, Luq recalls a legend that there was a casket inside the palace that helped them remember. Pike is adamant about saving La'an, who risked her life to save his, and the only way to do so was to help M'Benga recover his memories. Luq, realizing Pike is serious, agrees to help, but they must do so before the next forgetting starts. Pike wonders how he is suddenly willing to help them, and Luq replies that Pike is guided by his emotions, which are his truth. The totem taught them that they lived in each moment, embraced them. If this was Pike's moment, he would help. Pike is firm that it was his moment, and he would go back to the palace to help restore their memories.

Luq leads the landing party to an area near the palace, where they gently set La'an down on the ground to rest. Pike asks M'Benga if it was safe to move her, and M'Benga replies that she would need to be close when he got his memory back; plus, if the forgetting came over them, they would forget she needed help anyway. Pike asks Luq to stay with her, and offers to bring his memory back when they found the casket. To their surprise, Luq refuses, telling them to leave him behind. He points out the keystone Pike was wearing, and asked if he deciphered its meaning. Pike knows only that it was a gift from someone he was connected to, someone he had to return to, and that he could feel it, feel them. Luq recognizes the feeling as love, something the forgetting couldn't take away... nor could it remove its absence. He rolls up his other sleeve, showing symbols he had inked over, though he did not remember why. The totems, he explains, passed from parent to child, but he had no one to give his to, and he didn't know the story... nor did he want to. He knew the absence, the loss, and knowing the story wouldn't ease his sorrow. M'Benga points out that he still carried the burden, and asked if he wanted to know why. Luq points out that they were going back for their lost memories, and didn't know what they would find either. Pike tells him they were doing it for La'an, and Luq adds that they were doing it for whoever gave Pike the gift too. He, on the other hand, is past the need to remember, and admits to being afraid of the pain. La'an is fading quickly, but tells them to "give 'em hell" for her. M'Benga asks if they were going through with it, and Pike confirms, saying they would have to get in close. Just then, the tinnitus takes hold.

It has also taken hold aboard the Enterprise, with both Spock and Ortega experiencing disorientation, followed by complete loss of their memory. Spock thinks the answers he wants are on the PADD in his hand, but finds he cannot read it, nor can Ortega. Ortega is confused and fearful, but also remembers feeling anger at Spock for some reason, and believes he is to blame. Spock, still Vulcan in spite of everything, replies that emotions were not facts. Ortega thinks they were trying to make something better, but thinks they made it worse instead. She backs away into the turbolift, confused by the computer asking for a destination, and she tells it to take her "home". The turbolift begins descending to deck six. As the lift opens, she sees several

members of the crew, including Chapel, in various states of confusion; one crewman is sitting hunched against a wall, hugging his knees to his chest. The computer, recognizing Ortega, illuminates the path to her quarters. As she enters, she immediately feels a sense of safety, but as she looks outside the viewport, asteroids from the debris field begin impacting the shields. Ortega huddles up against her bed, pleading with "somebody" to "make it stop".

Outside the palace, Pike gets over the disorientation caused by the tinnitus, standing right behind one of the guards, just as M'Benga attacks the other. The guard in front of Pike grazes M'Benga with his phaser before Pike takes him down. M'Benga sees he will be fine, but can't put weight on the leg. Pike hands him the other guard's rifle and tells him to keep them busy as long as he can while he goes inside to find their memories.

Ortega, huddled in her quarters, calls out to the computer (who she thinks is a person) asking for help. She begs for help. At first, the computer asks if she needs medical attention, but Ortega replies that she wants to "get away". The computer then asks if she wants to plot a course. This phrase seems to have meaning to her, but she doesn't know who she is or why that would mean anything to her. The computer identifies her by name and position. Ortega begins repeating her name, along with the phrase "I fly the ship". Determined, she returns to the bridge and takes the helm, flying them into the debris field.

As she does, Pike enters the palace, shooting through the guards, before confronting Nguyen in his throne room. The "High Lord" tells Pike he was not supposed to be there. Engaging in a brief firefight, Pike disarms Nguyen and hurls him to the floor. Nguyen yields, and Pike demands the casket with their memories. Nguyen realizes Pike heard the story from the totem, and tells him it isn't real. Pike tells him to stop lying, and begins kicking him, demanding to know how the palace Kalar have their memories while he and his friends don't, if it was a machine or a chemical that made them forget. "I need our memories!" Pike screams at him.

Ortega, now more sure of herself, nimbly flies the Enterprise through the debris field, thinking it was "so far, so good". As she begins to fly straight at a large asteroid in front of them, Spock thinks it wise to avoid it, but Ortega replies there was no time, and they had to "thread the needle". Using the ship's phasers, she carves through the asteroid and takes the ship through.

Pike begins ransacking the throne room, until he comes across a crate of Starfleet supplies. Nguyen says it was all he had. Pike recognizes them all as tools, not memories. Nguyen asks if he recognizes those things. Pike, holding a tricorder in his hand, realizes they do feel familiar somehow. Nguyen reminds him that a box couldn't hold memories; an asteroid had impacted Rigel VII thousands of years before, and the palace was made of an ore that shielded them from its radiation; the palace Kalar's helmets were made of the same ore. Pike doesn't believe him, but Nguyen insists it was true, though of course Pike wouldn't believe him. Pike realizes that Nguyen knows who he is. Nguyen admits he thought Pike would wander around, get lost among the field Kalar, but it figured that he would start a revolution instead, and starts laughing. Pike says his friend was dying. Nguyen tells him it would come back to him soon, as he had been inside the palace long enough. Pike demands he stop laughing, and repeatedly punches him in the face, at one point almost sobbing that he just wanted their memories back. Nguyen, still giggling, tells him his friend would die. Pike, angry now, retrieves his phaser and points it at Nguyen, who fearfully takes it all back, begging not to be killed. The ringing disorients Pike for a moment, before he lowers his phaser. Now recognizing the man at his feet, he assures his old yeoman he was not going to kill him. Nguyen points out he had just been about to, all over a "fairy tale", and reminds him how he had said Rigel VII changes people. Pike disagrees, saying it showed them who they really were, before he sets his weapon down. He had come to save his security officer, saying the lives of his crew meant everything to him. When Nguyen was reported killed the last time they were there, Pike mourned him, and apologizes for leaving him behind. But everything that happened afterward was on Nguyen, and he couldn't blame Pike for it. Nguyen asks what would come next. Pike replies he was bringing him home, and Starfleet would decide the rest.

Inside, M'Benga is able to treat La'an's injury. Luq sits on the steps, lost in his memories. M'Benga admits that he had been right, that perhaps not having a past was a good thing. La'an agrees, but adds that some memories were worth the pain of others, and that it was good to be back. Pike sees that Luq has regained his memories. Luq remembers that he had had a son, who was a lot like Pike himself. He admits he was wrong, that all field Kalar should have their memories. He then points to the keystone Pike is wearing, asking who had given it to him. "Someone I need to apologize to," Pike replies.

The landing party returns to the Enterprise, where Spock was able to develop a shield harmonic to block out the radiation that caused the forgetfulness. Pike decides on a permanent solution to the Kalar's troubles: removing the asteroid from the surface. Spock asks if that was not a violation of the Prime Directive, but Pike replies that this one asteroid changed thousands of years of history on the planet, something that was not "natural development". Spock admits the captain's logic "feels" sound to him. Two shuttles lift the asteroid from the surface for the Enterprise to take into its own tractor beam; with a little "fancy flying" from Ortegas, the asteroid is hurled into the debris field, away from the planet.

Batel meets with Pike in his quarters, asking about diverting two starships for a routine prisoner transfer. Pike tells her it was more than that. Batel has read the report, noting the "rough" couple of days he had had. He realizes that the mission had showed him something about himself, and about their relationship. He holds up the keystone she had given him, saying that she had been right about it guiding lost sailors home. In that way, Batel had helped guide Pike home, and that was what had happened on Rigel VII. He admits he had acted "like an ass", and asks her to forgive him. In response, she kisses him, playfully adding that they would see how the next thirty minutes went, and go from there.

Charades

Season 2

Episode Number: 15

Season Episode: 5

Originally aired: Thursday July 13, 2023
Writer: Kathryn Lyn, Henry Alonso Myers
Director: Jordan Canning
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokun (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Mia Kirshner (Amanda Grayson), Michael Benyaer (Sevet), Dan Jeanotte (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk), Ellora Patnaik (T'Pril), Gia Sandhu (T'Pring), Anjuli Cain (Yellow / Blue (voice)), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer (voice)), Ryan Taerk (Durik)
Summary: A shuttle accident leads to Spock's Vulcan DNA being removed by aliens, making him fully human and completely unprepared to face T'Pring's family during an important ceremonial dinner.



The USS Enterprise travels at sub-impulse speeds through the Vulcan system on a survey of the moon of Kerkhov on the far edge of the sector, attempting to discover what became of the ancient Kerkhuvian civilization that mysteriously vanished. Captain Pike has elected to have the ship travel at sub-impulse speeds to "take in the view", leaving the crew with some downtime. Nurse Chapel is taking that time to prepare for her two-month fellowship sponsored by the Vulcan Science Academy. Dr. M'Benga,

Uhura, and Ortegas and La'an respectively quiz Chapel on Korby's three principles of archaeological medicine: First, medicine is always ancient and new, as cultures' understanding of medicine changes over time; second, the keys to solving medical problems are often found by looking backward; and third, archaeological medicine is as much a study of history as science. La'an wonders why, if Chapel is supposed to be interning on Vulcan, why she is not working with Spock. Ortegas explains that things are "weird" between the two of them, earning her an incredulous look from Chapel.

Later in the day, Chapel and M'Benga are in the turbolift when they are joined by Spock. Chapel looks over at him, but he remains staring straight ahead until he reaches his destination. Spock has been taking advantage of the therapies suggested by Dr. M'Benga to fully suppress his emotions, which has allowed him not only to carry out his duties, but also find other interests, such as cooking. On that score, he receives a few tips from his captain, who tells him to always use fresh herbs, never synthesized. He offers him a pair of samples to smell, but Spock explains that he is using a nasal suppressant, which most Vulcans do, saying the smell of Humans is something one must get "used to". He then proceeds to a briefing with Lieutenant Kirk, who explains the mission to discover the fate of the Kerkhuvian civilization; Spock makes a point to clean up the dishes and crumbs left on the conference table. Finally, he joins Ortegas, Uhura, La'an, and Una in the crew lounge, where the others share a joke he considers "fascinating".

Spock then has a communication with his fiancée, T'Pring, who tells him she has arranged to have a V'Shal dinner, a ceremonial engagement meal, with her family when he visits. Spock is somewhat taken aback, given that he is not speaking with his father Sarek. T'Pring's parents are aware, but with Spock's Starfleet schedule so challenging, her mother T'Pril felt it would be best. T'Pril is still opposed to their union, and T'Pring hopes this would help alleviate tensions. Spock compliments her logical assessment, and offers to help however he is able. The thought of it distracts Spock for a period, including during a meeting with Captain Pike discussing personnel changes for the shuttle flyby of the Kerkhovian moon. Spock explains T'Pring's announcement, saying that Humans would call it a "big deal". Pike offers to let someone else do the flyby, but Spock assures him he can manage, and thinks any personnel changes would be helpful. Pike explains that he now has a passenger.

Spock's passenger turns out to be Chapel. He says it is good to see her, to which Chapel points out they had seen each other in the turbolift the other day. Spock apologizes if he has offended her, as he has many duties on his mind, before asking if she is here because of the impending fellowship. Chapel confirms, saying if they could find out what happened to the Kerkhovians, it would unlock a "treasure trove" of medical data. Spock recalls rumors of a robust system of medicine, more advanced than anything of the present, and tells her that the Vulcan Science Academy would be lucky to have someone of her experience. While appreciative of the compliment, Chapel expresses the feeling that Spock has been avoiding her. After an awkward pause, the computer announces they were in scanning range. The initial scans showed a substantial civilization left behind, and Spock believes the new energy reading will give some clue as to what happened to the people. The anomaly appears to be a stable vortex, a rupture in space-time. But the shuttle flies in too close, and radiation from the vortex causes them to lose control of the shuttle. Spock and Chapel exchange one last look before the shuttle is pulled into the vortex.

Spock regains consciousness in sickbay, with Pike, M'Benga, and Chapel looking over him. Pike explains he was in a shuttle accident. Spock admits to feeling "strange". Chapel explains they crashed, and then awoke in space somewhere close to the Enterprise. While she was unhurt, Spock had been healed by something... only that something turned him completely Human. Staring at his reflection in the mirror, Spock cannot help but release a colorful metaphor to express his confusion...

Una and La'an go over the shuttle to determine what happened. The shuttle had been found floating dead in space, and the logs indicated that it had crashed, but something had repaired and deep-cleaned it. La'an finds a device in the pilot's seat which is definitely not part of the shuttle. On the bridge, Uhura confirms it to be alien, and speculates it may be some kind of "calling card", with routing instructions for a subspace call. Pike asks if she can open a channel, and she does so — and appears to be getting visuals back. She asks how the captain wants to proceed. Enthusiastic about a possible first contact, Pike asks for it to be put on screen. A shimmering ball of light appears on the screen and greets them, identifying itself as Yellow, being of Kerkhov. Yellow explains that the shuttle collided with their transport tunnel, and per Kerkhovian law, damage had to be repaired in the event of an accident — and as "remediation" was made, no further contact was necessary. Pike tries to explain that the Kerkhovians also "repaired" a member of the crew, to which Yellow replies that the two beings on the shuttle "did not match", and one — Spock — had "mixed instructions". After being informed that both were alive, Yellow says simply that remediation was made, no thanks required, and no further contact necessary, before closing the channel. Uhura is unable to get them back.

Spock muses that he may now be stuck in Human form, and M'Benga assures him it would only be temporary until they cured him. Pike asks how he feels, and Spock admits he feels angry, powerless, annoyed... and weirdly hungry, asking if it was a normal Human feeling. M'Benga confirms that hunger could affect one's mood. He also expresses gratitude for their help, in a rather enthusiastic, Human manner. Pike also points out the matter of his obligations on Vulcan, and a look of what can only be described as horror goes over his face; it had completely slipped his mind during the recovery. He explains that T'Pring's mother hates him, and he wonders if he now smells "more Human". Pike tells him he has already spoken to T'Pring and to his family, and Spock all but panics, demanding to know what Pike told them. Pike tries to calm him, assuring him that he had only told them he was in an accident and recovering on the ship, and they agreed it was logical to postpone the dinner. M'Benga adds that Chapel was working around the clock to reverse his condition, adding that there was nothing technically wrong with him. Spock

thinks it best to return to his duties and social obligations. Pike urges him to take it easy, and get his "sea legs" under him. "Aye aye, Captain," Spock replies in seafarer's fashion, leaving Pike to wonder if he was making a mistake.

In the crew lounge, Spock sits at the table with his shipmates as Ortega tells a joke, and he actually joins in the laughter. He then joins Pike in his quarters, taking in the smell of bacon as the captain prepares bacon and eggs in his quarters. Later, during Kirk's continued mission briefing, he urges him to clean up his plates, and flies into a rage when he doesn't react to it, forcing some of the officers in the room to restrain him as he threatens to "break" Kirk. Speaking later with La'an, who thinks emotions were "new" to him, Spock explains that Vulcans had emotions, they just learned to suppress them; Human emotions were different — intense, and near constant. La'an compares his situation to being a Human teenager, calling it a "delightful cocktail" of anger, fear, sexual attraction, and hunger, adding that one was "constantly snacking" during adolescence. Spock admits to constantly feeling hunger, as well as sadness and frustration... and then looking at La'an, to suddenly having "strange feelings", followed by embarrassment. She awkwardly tells him he just needed to work on impulse control, before making as polite an exit as possible.

Chapel experiences some frustration of her own as she searches for a cure to Spock's condition. M'Benga enters, asking if she has been there all night, and she replies that her protein sequences keep collapsing into "goo". She wonders how the Kerkhovians managed to do what they did, and M'Benga thinks it has something to do with their being interdimensional beings who do not experience space and time as they do. Chapel blames herself, thinking if she had not been on the shuttle, the Kerkhovians would not have done this, but M'Benga counters by saying if she hadn't been there, Spock might be dead, and she wouldn't be trying to save him at all. Chapel knows survivor guilt is easy to spot on the outside, but is not fun on the inside. M'Benga urges her to take a break, and reminds her she was missing "something important". Chapel realizes she has the interview for the fellowship, and rushes out.

Chapel's hopes are soon dashed, however: Durik, the professor from the Academy, makes clear he is not impressed with the essay she submitted, as it was not a word-for-word recitation of the principles, and that most applicants would need to memorize a year's worth of the material to be even considered for his seminar. Chapel explains she had not wanted to repeat everything word for word, and thought that her field work would be considered, given that she had made several discoveries. Durik curtly acknowledges this, and replies he will speak to her as need be, before cutting off the channel. As she leaves to return to sickbay, Chapel encounters Spock in the corridor, calling her "Christine" rather than "Nurse Chapel", and sees she is upset. He asks if it was able to the fellowship, and she says she doesn't wish to speak about it. Spock remarks on how Vulcans could be "such jerks" — and to her surprise, he hugs her, saying that she looked like she needed it, and asked if she had misread the moment. Chapel assures him he had not, but finds it was not a typical response for him. Just then, Pike calls Spock to the transporter room immediately. When Spock asks if it was an emergency, the captain replies that it depended on one's definition of "emergency": Spock's mother, Amanda Grayson, was beaming aboard. The look on Spock's face makes clear this does fit that definition.

Pike gives Pelia's regards to Amanda, saying that she was away dealing with the ship's dilithium shortage. Amanda thinks that, knowing her, she was probably procuring some "weird antiques" as well, and Pike muses that she had been very enthusiastic about purchasing dilithium. Spock enters, wearing a beanie to hide his ears and eyebrows (or lack thereof). When Amanda asks, Spock says it was "regulation", and Pike plays along, saying he had one just like it. Amanda tells him that T'Pring's family is unhappy; they had already postponed the V'Shal dinner several times due to Spock's Starfleet schedule, and she urges him that they had to do it now. Spock tries to demur, saying they were quite busy, and Pike again tries to play along. Amanda is not buying it, saying that she believed the crew was on half-duty rotation to allow them to rest. Pike admits that is technically true. T'Pring and her family have agreed to have the dinner aboard the Enterprise the following evening. "What wonderful news," Spock says, through firmly gritted teeth.

Amanda notices Spock acting strangely, and he calls it "muscle spasms" from the accident. She thinks it best, then, that the dinner would be aboard the Enterprise, where he could be close to their doctor. She tries to go on about the three V'Shal rituals, and noting that with T'Pril's known opposition, there was no margin for error; if they postponed again, the wedding might be

called off. Spock finally snaps, saying he had been in an accident and was in no state to have the dinner. Amanda tells him to take off the hat, and he does, showing that he appears completely Human. Spock's only reaction is a weak, "Hi, Mom."

Amanda discusses the situation with Pike while Spock snacks on the fruit bowl on the other side of the room. Pike assures Amanda his people were working on a way to reverse Spock's condition, but there would be no guarantee they could do it before the dinner. Spock again urges them to postpone; the rituals had to go perfectly, and clearly he was not Vulcan enough to pull that off now. But Amanda warns that tensions had arisen between the two families; T'Pril's reluctance to go forward with the union was because of her. T'Pring's father, Sevet, had agreed to the betrothal because he wished to connect with Sarek's family, but T'Pril is proud and not fond of Humans, and is looking for any excuse to back out of the union. Spock points out that her future son-in-law appearing fully Human might be that excuse. Pike wonders how the engagement might be affected by Spock's condition, and Amanda explains the complexity of Vulcan engagements; if the agreement was broken, the union would not be valid under Vulcan law, and T'Pring's family would disown her if she chose to remain with Spock, which would be a great shame to her. Spock asks for their actual options, wondering how he could pretend to be Vulcan if he couldn't even fool his own mother. Amanda reminds him that a mother would know, and plus, Spock was not a practiced liar... yet. She says she is going to do what she should have done a long time ago: Teach Spock about his Human side, teach him how to lie — with Pike's help, of course. Pike asks if he had a choice in the matter, and Amanda matter-of-factly replies he did not.

M'Benga gives Spock a set of prosthetic ears, explaining that they couldn't make it a genetic modification so as not to interfere with Chapel's possible cure. Amanda goes over the first V'Shal ritual with Vulcan tea, using a blend traditional to T'Pring's family. When Spock thinks it didn't seem so hard, she reminds him of the handling of the Vulcan teapot — which was scalding hot to Human hands, whereas a Vulcan would feel nothing. Amanda, however, lifts the pot without difficulty, saying that as a Human living on Vulcan, she had learned to suppress her pain. Uhura, with the aid of La'an, Una, and Ortega, tries to retrain Spock in speaking like a Vulcan — flat, without emotion. They have a bit of fun with it, using their impressions of his voice, with Ortega adding how he could move his eyebrow without moving any other muscle in his face. When Spock asks if he really sounds like that, they all say at once that he does. Next is the Ritual of Awareness, in which the young couple is made aware of all their faults and flaws. While the timer counts down, T'Pring's parents will tell him all the things they think he is doing wrong — like asking him how they plan to spend a future together when he is away for months at a time in Starfleet. Spock incredulously asks if they were going there already, but Ortega points out she hadn't even started yet, earning a sheepish apology. The last ritual would involve a mind meld, but that is something that Spock cannot fake. Amanda realizes their ruse was not going to work once they reached that stage. Spock hopes that M'Benga and Chapel find a cure before then.

Chapel, however, is having no luck. All the genetic models to use Vulcan genome to replace the replicated Human genome are not working. Worse, the models are showing histone unspooling, and they have only 24 hours before Spock's cells lose all genetic plasticity; if they do not change Spock back in that time, he would be stuck as a Human forever. M'Benga suggests looking outside of Federation standard medicine, and suggests some experimental treatments he picked up from the Trinar. Chapel has already been through M'Benga's experimental files, and they are of no help. They could not reverse his condition, but they knew someone who could, because they already had: The Kerkhovians. M'Benga wonders how she would be able to convince them. "I can be very persuasive," Chapel replies as she rushes out.

Chapel approaches Ortega and Uhura in the crew lounge with her proposal to fly close to the anomaly and make contact with the Kerkhovians. Uhura thinks it possible; even though the Kerkhovian data chip was not functioning now, getting close enough to the anomaly might allow its ambient energy to activate it. Ortega is less than enthusiastic, considering the last shuttle to go near the anomaly crashed, but Chapel is adamant: If they do nothing, Spock would be stuck like this forever. She had been in that crash and survived, while Spock was changed, and believes she had to try if there was any way to save him. Uhura asks for their meals "to go".

Spock anxiously waits with Amanda in the transporter room. He is sure T'Pring will arrive first, and he will escort her to Pike's quarters and explain the situation, while Amanda would delay T'Pril and Sevet to buy him time. Amanda takes her son's hand and assures him it will be

well. Spock, reassured, gives the order to energize. As he begins to greet his betrothed formally, T'Pol interrupts by saying that she has spent the past two days with her mother and could not stomach further formalities. She notes he looks "strange", saying it was not a good time to change his hairstyle. Amanda asks if T'Pol was being her usual self, and T'Pol replies she is, and that it was "challenging". Amanda offers to handle the greeting of her parents, allowing T'Pol and Spock time to themselves.

Spock says he had something he needed to discuss before the ritual, pertaining to her mother. T'Pol is not enthused by the idea, saying that T'Pol already took up a great deal of space in her mind, and that they had debated that morning for three hours over her outfit. Spock, trying to play the role, simply calls it "fascinating", and T'Pol concedes it might be, in a way that it would be fascinating that some species ate their young. Spock loses control and nearly starts laughing, before covering it up with a cough, saying he had started choking. T'Pol urges him to be careful, as T'Pol was looking for any excuse to call off the engagement. When she asks what he had to say, he simply replies that he would help in any way they could.

Pike has prepared his quarters for the dinner, and Spock and T'Pol are there first. T'Pol arrives not long after, with Amanda and Sevet behind her, a look of disdain on her face. Sevet considers the quarters comfortable for the occasion, while T'Pol dismisses them as merely "adequate", with a certain "odor" to them. Amanda diplomatically says it would be finer to have done so in their house on Vulcan, but due to Spock's injuries, she was grateful they had agreed to hold it aboard the Enterprise. Spock explains his "injuries" in the accident as being some extensive "nerve damage" and singed eyebrows, which all present examine while he tries not to squirm. He also adds that Pike has worked to prepare traditional Vulcan meals, and Pike presents his tevmel for them. Sevet appears to enjoy it, but T'Pol is immediately judgmental, noting how there was too much of a twist, the halak was not fresh, and it appeared to have been salted. Pike explains he used salt as a preservative, as a starship ran hotter than a Vulcan kitchen. Sevet simply says he may have to practice further. T'Pol notes the late hour, and urges them to begin. Pike, trying to delay, adds that there is more food to serve; while Sevet seems enthused by the idea, a look from T'Pol leads him to backtrack, and T'Pol adds she is not hungry.

Aboard the shuttle, Uhura is unable to get a signal through the rift due to gravimetric interference. Chapel asks if it was possible to get closer. Ortega sarcastically gives her opinion of flying closer to the anomaly that nearly killed Spock and Chapel, but the look on Chapel's face ultimately convinces her. As they approach, Uhura sees the problem: a distortion field around the rift was preventing signals from getting through. She suggests "wedging" the shuttle through the "door" to get a signal through. Ortega shoots the idea down, saying the gravitational shearing would tear them apart. Uhura points out what Yellow had said, that on the other side of the rift was a transport tunnel that was "probably" mostly empty. Ortega points out that "probably" was a lot to bet on. Uhura urges her to think of an ocean in a storm, how it was raging on the surface but calm beneath. Ortega replies that she hated analogies because they were never like they said. Chapel is determined to go through with it for Spock, but says the others do not have to risk themselves. Ortega suggests contacting the ship, but the interference blocked comms for a light year out. Ortega notes how it seemed she would be the one voting against the "crazy maneuver", thinking it didn't sound like her; both she and Uhura agree to push on. Ortega brings the shuttle along the surface, and then up and into the rift.

Aboard the Enterprise, Spock approaches the teapot for the first ritual, looking up at Pike in front of him, who gives a slight, encouraging nod. Despite the burning to his hands, he is able to pour the tea and return the teapot to the flame without any apparent difficulty. T'Pol takes one sip from her cup and pronounces it "acceptable". T'Pol takes Spock's hand (still burned from the teapot) and whispers her approval.

Chapel, Ortega, and Uhura find themselves removed from the shuttle. Both Uhura and Ortega wonder if they were dead, the latter thinking if someone had told them they were, she wouldn't be surprised. Uhura guesses they were in interdimensional space. Chapel calls out to anyone who might be listening, and a Kerkhovan materializes behind them, greeting them with the same voice as before. Uhura remembers speaking to it earlier, asking if it was Yellow, but the Kerkhovan replies that it was Blue. They discuss the "remediation" of the shuttle crash; Blue says that no complaint was made, but Chapel steps up to say that Spock was "remediated" wrong, and that if they did not fix him soon, they would not be able to change him back. Blue notes that a complaint outside of the response period was "irregular". Chapel asks to speak to

Yellow, and Blue departs. Uhura asks what happened now, and Chapel says that they would have to wait.

The Ritual of Awareness begins aboard the Enterprise. Amanda says that T'Pring could visit more often, and that she could express more self-confidence — something Sevet has also encouraged. T'Pril does not consider it "satisfactory". Amanda knows T'Pring is aware of her feelings, and did not wish to be needlessly cruel, but T'Pril considers Amanda's Human instincts negate the purpose of the ritual, and calls Amanda too timid. Now it is T'Pril's turn. Not only does she bring up the fact that Spock was away for months in Starfleet, she considers it an abandonment of her daughter. She also considers that Sarek is correct in shunning him, calling him a disgrace to his family and to all Vulcan for choosing Starfleet over his people. Spock stares in silence, anger simmering in him, as the timer finally runs out and the ritual ends. He excuses himself saying he must use the bathroom, and using his solitude, lets out his feelings of rage, screaming into a folded towel so as not to let others hear him. He then calls M'Benga in sickbay, asking for progress. M'Benga explains they had hit a roadblock, as Chapel had gone to contact the Kerkhovians. Spock is horrified, but M'Benga reminds him how Chapel could not be deterred when she set her mind to something. He worriedly asks where she was now.

In the Kerkhovians' space, Chapel paces before Yellow arrives. Chapel tries to explain about the situation, but Yellow responds with the same reply about "remediation" being made, and no further contact required. Chapel tells Yellow that a mistake was made that the Kerkhovians needed to correct. Yellow answers about how complaints outside the response period were "irregular", and asks about their relationship to Spock. Chapel answers that he was her friend. Yellow says that friends were not allowed complaints outside of the response period because they do not have "sufficient connection" to the being in question. Chapel explains friendship was different in their world. Yellow believes they were one another's caregivers, and Chapel denies this at first, before amending to "sort of". This answered a question the Kerkhovians had had about something that occurred during the accident: Spock had diverted the shields on the shuttle to protect Chapel at the risk of his own life. Chapel is stunned at this revelation, before Yellow asks again what her relationship was to him. Chapel can only say she doesn't know, but both Ortegas and Uhura are well aware that she does know. She tries to say it was "complicated", but Uhura urges her to make it simple, or Spock will never be what he was again.

Warring with her feelings, Chapel explains that Spock was her friend, but there were times where she wished they had more connection. When the Kerkhovians changed him, they made him into someone more approachable, easier to talk to, someone who could understand her feelings better. But at the same time, they took away a part of him that she was also connected to, and pleads with Yellow to make him again what he was.

Back on the Enterprise, Spock emerges, and T'Pril tells him it was time for the mind meld ritual. He looks distinctly uneasy, and T'Pring notices. Pike interjects, electing to add a Human tradition to "deepen the ceremony": a game of charades. Spock asks Pike to explain the rules, just as Chapel enters with a hypospray with his "vitamins". He explains it to the others as part of his treatment. Chapel takes him again into the bathroom to administer the treatment, and assures him that the Vulcan genome will begin to return immediately, while his physical features would be restored in some hours. He tells her he is glad to see her, and was worried about her. She asks him why he moved the shields to save her. He calls it the "logical choice", as he had a higher survival expectancy as a Vulcan, but Chapel isn't buying it. He tells her he feels many things, and that it was confusing, and she admits it was for her as well. Before he can speak further on his feelings, Chapel gives him the injection and tells him to return to the dinner, as he had people waiting for him. As she leaves, she visibly struggles to keep her feelings together.

Spock concludes the mind meld with his mother successfully, saying his memory was of an "ordinary day" in which Amanda walked him to school. T'Pril considers this "mundane", but T'Pring speaks up, saying it was illogical to criticize the nature of a memory. The ritual was completed, and her assessment was not required — only her acknowledgment of the conclusion of the dinner. T'Pril gives it, to which Sevet immediately asks if there was any more of Pike's tevmel, to which the captain is glad to oblige. T'Pril admits she had her doubts, but despite "many faults beyond his control", he upheld the betrothal agreement. Amanda sardonically notes it must have been difficult for her to say. When Spock points out the phrase "faults beyond [his] control", T'Pril bluntly replies that she considers his Vulcan nature "diluted", and thought it must have been challenging to hold on to his logical side, and yet he impressed her in spite of

his "handicap". When Spock asks if she believed it would have been impossible for a Human to have conducted the ritual, T'Pol replies she does, "without question". T'Pol asks what he is doing, and in answer, Spock replies that it was done by a Human (at which point Pike, with the tray of tevmel, immediately makes himself scarce), and removes his prosthetic ears. He points out how T'Pol considers his Human side a "handicap", yet he considers his mother to be the most resilient, compassionate, tolerant person he has ever known, one who has been judged by Vulcans her entire life, yet stands by — for love, for family, and for him. His only regret was that it had taken so long for him to speak those words to her.

T'Pol is confused that Spock would not feel comfortable telling his own fiancée about his condition. Spock admits, given how difficult Vulcans found it to lie, that it would be more logical to leave her out of it. T'Pol points out they had been through so much together, even sharing their katras at one point, and asks if there was no point he even considered letting her know. Spock thought in the heat of his Human emotions, he didn't want to add to T'Pol's burdens, given how much she had to deal with from her mother. T'Pol admits to the logic of it, but points out that nearly everyone else on the ship was party to the ruse, and asks how she was meant to feel about that. She thinks that perhaps it was best they took time apart.

In sickbay, Durik contacts Chapel again, and says that the Science Academy has elected not to provide the fellowship, and that she might apply for it later if she felt it a proper use of her time. Chapel replies that she had gone to interdimensional space that day, and had convinced a race that had never met with Humans or Vulcans before to give her access to an ancient medical procedure. The Vulcan scientist's curiosity is immediately piqued, and he asks what kind of procedure. She cheerfully tells him that he can read about it in her paper when she published it later that year, and tells him that the fellowship was not ready for her, before closing the channel.

In Pike's quarters, Spock remarks that they had had "quite a day". Pike pours two drinks and offers another "Human ritual" that helps in times like these: commiseration. He hands Spock one of the glasses, and they share a toast. Later, in the transporter room, Spock asks his mother about the memory she chose in the mind meld ritual, about the Vulcan children asking him to play with them. Amanda replies she chose it because it was the first time she saw he felt accepted. Seeing it through her eyes, he could see that Amanda herself was not, that she was shunned by Vulcan mothers. Amanda assured herself that Spock was happy, and their judgment was a sign of their own weakness. Spock now sees and feels what Amanda had to give up, living as a Human on Vulcan; he had spent so much of his life trying to follow the Vulcan path, he had failed to see his mother's journey. "It is not easy, being a Human who loves a Vulcan," Amanda concedes, as she steps onto the transporter pad.

In his quarters, Spock paces for a moment, before heading to the door. He stops short when he realizes Chapel is there; he had just been on his way to see her. Inviting her in, he explains that he and T'Pol had chosen to spend time apart. When she asks how he feels about it, he confesses he feels badly, but also he feels it necessary, because he is conflicted by his feelings for another. Chapel, who has warred with that same feeling for him, quips about "a Vulcan with feelings", and Spock points out they did have them, and they were more potent than Human emotions, which is why Vulcans worked to suppress them... but he did not want to suppress this feeling any longer. When he asks why she had come to see him, she passionately kisses him. He asks what that meant, and she tells him to shut up before kissing him again.

Lost in Translation

Season 2

Episode Number: 16

Season Episode: 6

Originally aired: Thursday July 20, 2023
Writer: Onitra Johnson, David Reed
Director: Dan Liu
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokin (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Paul Wesley (Captain James T. Kirk), Dan Jeannotte (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk), Michael Reventar (Lieutenant Saul Ramon), Carol Kane (Pelia), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer (voice))
Summary: Uhura seems to be the only one who can hear a strange sound that seems to trigger terrifying hallucinations.



The USS Enterprise arrives at Bannon's Nebula on the edge of explored space, where Starfleet is building the Bavali Station, an outpost and refinery designed to harvest deuterium, used as fuel for starships. Captain Pike muses on the idea that a million years in the future, the stars born in the nebula would shine on explorers just like them, but the area would seem to be different. He looks over at Uhura at communications, asking if she was awake. Uhura replies that her eyes were technically open but admits

she had not been getting much sleep for several nights. Pike is appreciative of her coordinating the mission but advises her that one should only "burn the candle at one end". Uhura then receives a message from the refinery, sending their greetings and reporting they were ready for the Enterprise's engineering details. Pike has her inform Chief Kyle to stand by.

Just then, Una emerges from the turbolift, remarking that congratulations were in order for Pike's promotion to fleet captain. Pike explains he has been given command over both the deuterium refinery and the USS Farragut until the station is brought online. Ortegas calls it the "shiniest gas station" she has ever seen, but Pike believes it more than just a "gas station", but the jumping-off point for the next age of exploration. Una jokingly expresses her fear of missing Pike's speech; Pike quips that he had started earlier, but Uhura had fallen asleep. Spock had thought the nebula's proximity to Gorn space was the reason for the mission, and Pike concedes he is probably right; the Gorn presence has been growing, and the station would help counter it. Spock reports that the Enterprise's Bussard collectors were operational while the refinery was off-line; though slower than the refinery, he advises that it might be logical to use the opportunity to refuel. Pike is of the same mind, and orders Ortegas to find a dense pocket of deuterium and "do some laps" — but not to take more than they needed. Just then, Uhura hears a strange signal in her earpiece, but when she tries to bring it up on speakers or find the recording, it is gone. She swears there was something there and goes to conduct a full diagnostic on the communication system.

Uhura heads up into one of the nacelles, reviewing a recording by Hemmer on how to recalibrate the system, when she is approached by Pelia. Uhura explains that she had asked for these calibrations so often that Hemmer had eventually showed her how to do it herself, and they recorded the process. Pelia recalls Hemmer had been one of her best students at Starfleet Academy, before backtracking (admitting she only said that because he was dead) and saying he was only "okay", but still impressed with where he managed to find himself. She then asks why Uhura had never spoken to her before. Uhura is sure she has, but Pelia knows she hasn't. She admits she had been very busy and welcomes Pelia to the Enterprise. As the chief engineer returns to work, Uhura looks back at the recording she made with Hemmer, where he is reassuring her that he would not let her blow up the ship. Uhura pauses the video, looking at it for a moment, before returning to work.

Walking the corridors with Una, Pike calls the whole project a "fiasco", saying the refinery was supposed to be online two months prior. The delay was caused by what Starfleet called "organizational difficulties", including having the previous superintendent recalled to Earth, and believes the project could use some of Una's "managerial fervor". The first officer sarcastically remarks on the pleasures of cleaning up other people's messes.

As Uhura steps into the turbolift to return to the bridge, she hears the same droning signal she had heard in her earpiece. Looking around, she sees Hemmer as a rotting corpse, snarling and lunging at her, causing her to fearfully back up against the wall of the lift.

In sickbay, Dr. M'Benga runs scans; based on what Uhura saw and heard, as well as increased activity in the visual cortex of her brain, he believes she was experiencing hallucinations. She had said she was watching a video of Hemmer, and his death on Valeo Beta V was still fresh in her mind. Uhura doesn't think Starfleet officers should randomly hallucinate, but M'Benga assures her she did nothing wrong — and the hallucination was not random. While she was in the nacelle, she was exposed to a small amount of refined deuterium and chalks it up to a mild case of deuterium poisoning, which could cause hallucinations. He gives her something to treat it, but also notes an imbalance in her serotonin and cortisol levels, indicating she wasn't sleeping. M'Benga warns that exhaustion could exacerbate the effects of deuterium poisoning and advises her to rest. Uhura wonders how she is supposed to sleep after what she just saw. M'Benga empathizes, but also recognizes a stubborn patient when he sees one and relieves her of duty until he is satisfied that she has slept.

Aboard the refinery, Una is leading the effort to bring the refinery online, sending a team to deck seven to stabilize the life support system. Pelia approaches, saying it was not as bad as it looked — it was "way worse". Una sees the central refining and storage systems were in good order, but Pelia points out the maintenance logs, which give her the feeling that things were breaking down faster than the crew was able to repair them. Luckily, Una points out, there were three crews at work now; the Enterprise and Farragut teams could fix the problem systems, while the station's teams could get the refinery running. Pelia is sure that she can "smell" an underlying issue that needed to be checked out. Una tells her she does not base her decision making on "feelings" and "smells", and any underlying issues would become clear as they proceed. Pelia just smiles and chuckles knowingly, before heading back to work.

In her quarters, Uhura tosses and turns restlessly, before finally rising from her bed. As she gets to her feet, however, she finds herself outside, and begins hearing the droning noise again, before looking to see a plume of smoke rising from the nearby woods. Then she suddenly awakens, back in bed in her quarters, wondering what she just saw.

In the transporter room, James T. Kirk beams over from the Farragut, greeted by his elder brother Sam. "Hell of a ship," Jim notes, before jokingly asking how Sam was part of the crew; Sam shoots back that Pike had asked for the more handsome Kirk brother and offers a tour. Jim accepts, as long as it ended at the bar. In the crew lounge, over a glass of Scotch whisky, Jim asks what was new and exciting in the world of xenanthropology. Sam says everything was new and exciting in that field, but rather than give an answer he is sure Jim doesn't care about, he asks about his news. Jim detects a bit of hostility, and he soon finds out why: Sam has found out that Jim has been tapped as the Farragut's new first officer, the youngest in the fleet... breaking the record set by their father, George, on the USS Kelvin. Jim points out that Sam was the one with their father's first name, even though he chose not to use it, and he felt he had to do something to "keep up". Sam thinks Jim's rise makes him look bad, remembering how their father had "old-fashioned ideas" about what a successful career and fulfilling life looked

like... and it was looking more like what Jim was doing. Jim asks why, if Sam was concerned about impressing their father, he was "wallowing" in a science lab, and Sam is offended by the implication. Jim believes records were made to be broken, and he put in extra work to break this one but believes they could make the "old man" proud in their own way. "Or not at all," Sam replies bitterly, as he finishes his drink and walks away.

Aboard the refinery, Una is relieved to see life support back online, but then the system begins failing almost immediately. As Pelia approaches, Una tells her they had to send a team to deck five to work on the EPS regulators. But Pelia has more worrisome news, having found something in the fuel regulation system. Pelia and her teams began looking into the functioning systems, despite Una's orders; Pelia justifies it by saying if she had followed Una's orders to the letter, she would never have found evidence of sabotage, which gets Una's full attention.

In the lounge, Spock is playing three-dimensional chess with Nurse Chapel, and brings up a matter he wishes to discuss, regarding the relationship they had begun. Given a starship's command hierarchy and the rules about fraternization among the crew, he believes he has to inform Starfleet. Chapel is reluctant, comparing it to the concept of Schrödinger's cat, the "cat" being their relationship existing (or not) in a "box"; if they let anyone see inside the "box", the "cat" might disappear. Uhura then approaches, admitting that she should be resting; Chapel remarks on how people tended to ignore the "orders" part of "doctor's orders". Uhura feels certain she does not have deuterium poisoning and mentions that she first heard the noise when she was on the bridge, before going into the nacelle. Chapel is certain that her symptoms are a classic sign of overwork and offers something to help her sleep. But for Uhura, sleep is the last thing on her mind. She walks up to the bar and asks for a Saurian brandy. In the seat next to her is Jim Kirk, who introduces himself. Uhura recognizes him as Sam's brother, and rebuffs what she believes is his attempt to hit on her. Kirk assures her he was not hitting on her, and that she looked like she needed a friend. She curtly replies she was not in the market for friends at that time, takes a sip of her drink, and walks out.

In the corridor, she sees the lights flickering and hears the droning noise again, before turning to see bloodied, broken bodies lying all along the deck. She tries to assure herself it was not real, but the droning noise persists, and she turns to see an illusion of herself, a knife in her hand and murder in her eyes. Uhura fights off her illusory self and brings it down with one punch. As she does, the lights return to normal, the corridors are empty... and Kirk is lying at her feet with a cut on his nose. "I told you I am not hitting on you," he says, while Uhura can only stare in shock.

Uhura apologizes profusely, unable to believe what she just did; Kirk can't believe it either, saying she seemed so "pleasant". She offers to take him to sickbay to have Dr. M'Benga fix his nose, but he doesn't think it a good idea; he could tell she had been seeing something that wasn't there, and thinks she has bigger problems than simply striking a superior officer. Sighing, she replies she has a dermal regenerator in her quarters, and all but drags him along.

In her quarters, Uhura repairs the damage to Kirk's nose. He remarks that the "nightmare visions" were turning her into a sadist, but assures her he does not think it was all just in her head. He has had deuterium poisoning before, and has also gone days without sleep, but never punched out a fellow officer due to either. He considers himself an "exquisite" judge of character, and he believes what she has told him, offering to help figure out what was really going on. Uhura has triple-checked the sensor logs, and there was nothing but deuterium in the nebula; according to M'Benga, she is the only one experiencing these symptoms... at least on the Enterprise. Kirk sees a potential line of investigation, offering to check in with the chief medical officer on the Farragut, and asks if he can bring her Uhura's medical file. He jokingly tells her not to punch any more officers until he returns.

On the refinery, Una and Pelia search for the saboteur. Una thinks it would have been easier if the lights or internal sensors were online, but Pelia counters that the station could have exploded if she had brought them up. They soon discover their saboteur is one of the Starfleet engineers, who appears to also be hallucinating, and urges them to keep "him" away. Una assures him no one was there, and no one would hurt him. The engineer keeps babbling that "it can't be real". Una puts her hand on his shoulder; when he asks if she was real, she gives him a reassuring nod, and asks for his name. He identifies himself as Lieutenant Saul Ramon. Una asks him why he sabotaged the station. Ramon is dumbfounded and keeps repeating that it wasn't real. Una calls the Enterprise, reporting a medical emergency.

Sitting alone in her quarters, Uhura looks up as the red alert klaxon begins to sound and steps out of her quarters... and onto the bridge, where she asks what was happening. Pike says only that they were under attack by an enemy. The viewscreen begins to crack and then finally shatters, venting Pike, Spock, and other members of the crew into space. As Uhura stares dumbfounded, she can hear Pike's voice calling to her; she is sitting at her station, and the entire bridge crew are looking at her in concern. Pike asks if she was not supposed to be on medical leave.

In the conference room, Pike tells Uhura that as her captain, he wants all of his officers healthy, both physically and mentally, and as her friend, he wants to help. Uhura notes the irony of a communications officer who can't communicate what was wrong with her. Just then, the door chimes, heralding Kirk returning from the Farragut. He congratulates Pike on his promotion, which Pike insists was only temporary, before saying he had come looking for Uhura, mentioning their earlier encounter. Kirk has heard about Ramon, who was now in the Enterprise sickbay. The Farragut's CMO had received a report about him the previous day; one of his friends had expressed concern about him, saying that he was seeing things that were not there... just like Uhura.

In sickbay, Pike questions Ramon about what he saw, but M'Benga warns that he might not be able to understand. His scans show significant damage to the speech and language centers of his brain, and it was getting worse, his auditory nerves firing wildly. Ramon suddenly doubles over in pain, hearing the same droning sound as Uhura. Ramon looks over at Uhura before grabbing one of the diagnostic tools from the nearby tray and slashing M'Benga across the chest, barreling through the nearby security officer before fleeing into the corridor. M'Benga assures Pike he was fine. Pike calls for security to deck four as he and the security officer give chase. Uhura thinks it was another hallucination, but Kirk assures her it was real, and that they had to stop Ramon before he hurt anyone else and urges her to follow him.

Pike and the security officer move quickly into the corridor as the lights suddenly switch to emergency power. Stopping at nearby flashlight storage panel, he grabs two flashlights and hands one to the security officer. They find one of the crew lying outside astrometrics, a deep slash across her stomach. Pike calls sickbay to send a medic. La'an catches up to them, saying that Ramon had cut the power conduit, which explained the loss of lighting. Pike tells the security man to stay with the wounded officer, while he and La'an pursue Ramon to engineering.

Kirk and Uhura, similarly armed and equipped with flashlights, are also part of the search, but Uhura is soon overwhelmed by the droning noise, as well as a hallucination of the walls closing in all around her. Kirk helps return her to reality, and she apologetically tells him she should go back to sickbay. He offers to accompany her, but she assures him she will be fine, and urges him to keep up with the search.

Pike and La'an catch up with Kirk in the corridor. Pike notes that La'an seems to know him, but she replies that it was no time to explain. If none of them have found Ramon, Kirk suspects he must have found a place to hide. Pike suggests doubling back. La'an looks for a moment at Kirk, recalling her previous interaction with him, before joining Pike.

Uhura finds a bloodstain near the access point of the port nacelle, and calls to all teams saying she may have found Ramon. Kirk is closest, and tells her to wait for him. Uhura, however, removes the access panel from the access tunnel and goes inside alone. There, she finds Ramon at the power console, and tells him to step away. She tells him she has been seeing and hearing the same things he has, but assures him they were not real — but she was. She identifies herself, saying she was born in Kenya, that she had a cat named Kamili, and that her first memory was her father playing the piano. She pleads with him to step away from the console. Ramon appears almost convinced, but then lunges to the fuel pod ejection systems. Uhura tries to physically stop him, but he is able to disarm her and push her away — right into Kirk, who calls for an emergency transport. As Uhura screams for them to wait, they are beamed to safety... and the fuel pod explodes, venting Ramon into space.

In sickbay, the wounded officer has died from her injury, and Chapel covers her body. Pike reflects on the situation — two were now dead, M'Benga in surgery, and the ship nearly disabled... and no one knew why. Uhura explains Ramon must have been hearing the same sound she had been, which to Pike is good news: it proved Uhura was not crazy, and that something was affecting her just as it had been affecting Ramon, and they would figure out what. Uhura believes she should be confined to quarters, wondering how long before she would sabotage the ship or

throw herself out an airlock, but Pike assures her it would not come to that. He has to confer with Una about getting the refinery online, but with Ramon dead, Starfleet has given Pike access to his personal logs and private medical files, which may hold the answers they need to help Uhura.

La'an spots Kirk just outside of sickbay, Kirk recalling her as a "stickler for orderly security records". She asks if he was injured, and he replies he was not, but was waiting on Uhura. La'an didn't realize they were friends, and Kirk explains they had just met, but she had looked like she needed help. From his perspective, Uhura was somebody who had a hard time asking for help, especially from friends, while from La'an's, Kirk was the kind of person to offer help to strangers in need. He explains that his father had been in Starfleet, and that he, Sam, and their mother Winona had followed him for Jim's entire childhood, one posting to another, and barely saw him. When Jim asked his mother why, she told him that he was helping people who really needed it; as a child, he wondered why his father put strangers' lives ahead of his, a feeling La'an is familiar with. He ultimately told himself if his father spent his life helping total strangers, it must have been important. La'an assures him that as one of those strangers helped by Starfleet herself, it was. As she leaves to continue her rounds, Kirk reminds her of the drink she owes him.

On the refinery, Una and Pelia finish bringing the routing system back online. Pelia thinks Una should be back on the Enterprise supervising the repairs there. Una had said so to Pike, but he disagreed, believing the station was top priority. Pelia can see Una has a problem with her. Una, somewhat heatedly, says she does not have a problem with Pelia, but with the situation, something Pelia dismisses as "malarkey". Una finally admits that she considers Pelia to be sloppy, disrespecting protocols, not following orders unless she felt like it... and she also had crumbs on her uniform, wondering when she could have eaten while they were there. She dismisses Pelia as a "space hippie". Pelia admits she has been called many things, but "space hippie" was a new one on her. She attributes Una's hostility to being too used to being the "smartest person in the room". Una protests against that, but Pelia is persistent, saying that Una hid behind order and discipline because it "killed" her when someone questioned her decisions, and asked whether her experience bought her any deference. Una concedes that Pelia has been in Starfleet since before she was born, but she was the ranking officer, and asks Pelia why she thinks that is. Pelia just smiles, before saying she would have the station online in a few hours.

Back on the Enterprise, Kirk and Uhura review Ramon's personal logs. Ramon recalls seeing his friend John standing in the mess hall like he was still alive, and tried to speak to him, causing his friends on the crew to look at him like he had gone mad; Ramon mentions the noise he hears, and wonders if he is going mad. Uhura is haunted by hearing someone experiencing the same thing she was, and based on the time index of Ramon's logs, she estimates she has a day and a half before she goes the same way he did. Kirk suggests they take a break and update Captain Pike on their progress (or lack thereof), and maybe get something to eat. He has heard that the mess hall was serving real cookies, not made in the matter synthesizer. Uhura heatedly says she does not need a cookie, to which Kirk jokes that now she sounded crazy. Seeing her reaction, he apologizes for the "dumb joke", but Uhura sees the problem: that it wasn't a joke.

Several years before, Uhura lost her parents and brother in a shuttle accident. She hadn't been there and never saw the crash site, but every time she closed her eyes, she could see the crash, see their deaths. It got so bad that she couldn't even look at their pictures. Hemmer's death brought those same feelings back, and she tried to cover it "with work and smiles and more work". She admits she has never been able to face death; everyone had their ways of dealing with it and moving on, but she doesn't know how. She wonders how she could be a Starfleet officer if she can't handle death. Rather than offer her some "comforting fairy tale", Kirk elects to be honest, saying that serving in Starfleet brought them up against death more than was fair. They didn't have to like it, but they did have to face it. And at the moment, death was winning; it had claimed Uhura's family and her friend, and it convinced her to forget them because that was less painful than holding onto their memories. "Now, you can let death win, or you can fight back," he urges her. "Hold onto them." He asks if she was still saying "no" to the cookie, earning a small laugh, before leaving for a moment. Uhura begins watching the recording with Hemmer again, walking her through recalibrating the communications system, telling her to dial down the gain on the subspace antenna, or else she would burn out the receiver. Hearing that last phrase leads Uhura to realize something, and she quickly heads out into the corridor, where she runs into Kirk. She shows him Ramon's brain scan, indicating the damage to the language centers of his

brain, an area that Uhura was also being affected by, and both were hearing the same sounds. She suspects that something in the nebula was trying to communicate with them, but the signal was so strong, it burned out those portions of Ramon's brain. Kirk realizes they need to speak with Sam.

Sam reviews what Uhura has told him about the symptoms, and how they started when they arrived in the nebula, but none of the scans showed any signs of lifeforms. There is a theory ("a bit fringe, but hear me out," he qualifies) that extra-dimensional creatures could emerge for periods in their space and attach themselves to atoms in their dimension. Jim recognizes this would mean they were not sophisticated lifeforms capable of speech or even language. Uhura notes there were similarities in the ways different species processed thoughts and ideas, and that the universal translator worked by recognizing those similarities. Jim is incredulous at the idea of unseen aliens using Uhura's brain as a universal translator, but she thinks it possible. The aliens send simple ideas to the language centers of her brain, which interprets them the only way it can: through her thoughts and memories. She felt the walls closing in around her, because they felt trapped. She was attacking herself, because they were responsible for it. They showed the ship being destroyed because they were desperate to break free. They were showing her visions of the ones she had loved, because what Starfleet was doing was killing them. The Kirks come to the same conclusion: these aliens had become bonded with the deuterium in the nebula, and the harvesting and refining of the deuterium was essentially torturing them. Uhura calls Pike, telling her to stop the activation of the refinery. But it was too late — the refinery had been activated five minutes earlier.

Uhura and Jim Kirk race to the turbolift, Uhura telling Pike to shut the station down immediately. But aboard the refinery, Una and Pelia are unable to get the station's automated systems to accept commands; Pelia fears that Ramon may have done more damage than they thought.

As they head to the bridge, Uhura hears the droning sound, and sees the visions of the shuttle crash that killed her family. Despite her fear, Uhura convinces herself to keep going, to see what she needed to see. She comes back to clarity on the bridge, Kirk looking at her with concern. Pike tells her they could not deactivate the automated systems, and asks for an explanation. Kirk begins to explain they may have found lifeforms in the nebula, and Uhura says that they were killing them. She sees Hemmer's rotted corpse standing on the bridge, staring at her. She explains that the aliens lived in the deuterium, and that they were being tortured and killed when they were pulled into the Enterprise's nacelles, and now the station was doing so at a much greater rate. Pike reminds her they could not see these lifeforms, but Uhura firmly tells him she could hear them, and so could Ramon, who had died trying to save them. Pike had told her that the station was a jumping-off point for seeking out new life, but what was the point of it if they were just killing what they found? Pike again tells her they couldn't shut the station down, and Uhura is adamant that they had to destroy it. Pike asks if she is certain, and she firmly answers she is; he then looks at Kirk, who nods once. Convinced, Pike asks for her plan. Uhura recommends evacuating the refinery, then venting all the deuterium from the fuel pods on both the Enterprise and the Farragut. Pike gives the order.

The Farragut and the shuttles clear the station, and Ortegás reports no lifesigns aboard. At Uhura's urging, the Enterprise fires a volley of photon torpedoes, destroying the station. Pike then asks Uhura if it worked. Uhura looks up, seeing Hemmer there still, but now healthy and whole. Hemmer smiles and nods to her, and she confirms aloud that they were safe. "That's it?" Ortegás asks, somewhat disbelieving. Smiling, Hemmer disappears from Uhura's view. "Yeah, that's it," she confirms. She remarks on Pike's earlier comment about the jumping-off point of a new age of exploration, and Pike concedes that they could build their "gas station" someplace else, without anyone living in the deuterium. He also assures her that if there was any blowback, it would be on him, taking full responsibility — or, he adds with a look at Kirk, he could say someone else's "brash influence" rubbed off on her. "Always happy to be of service," Kirk replies in good humor, before pointing out that Uhura may have just helped discover a new kind of life, and Starfleet might give her a medal. Pike has Uhura return to her station — first to contact the Farragut to tell them to depart the nebula as soon as the shuttles and escape pods were brought aboard, then to hail Admiral Nagawa on his private channel... and then after that, to take a nap, adding that it was an order.

Aboard their shuttle, Una brings up Starship Maintenance 307, the class Pelia had been her instructor in at the Academy, and that Pelia had given her a C grade. Una protests that her paper

was meticulously researched, but Pelia counters, in a bit of a throwback to their earlier argument, that her work was "sloppy". Then she softens, saying that Una's issue with her wasn't about that "well-deserved" grade. It was because Hemmer was dead, and Pelia had taken his place as chief engineer; every time Una saw her, it dredged up the sadness. Una's expression confirms it, and Pelia tells her she knows that feeling well, having experienced it "too many times" in her long life, but adds that if Una wants to say it was about the C, she would not contradict it.

In the Enterprise lounge, a live band regales the crew, as Uhura sits with Kirk, showing him pictures of her family, remembering how her mother had always made her laugh. "To staying in the fight," Kirk says, toasting the occasion. When she asks why he thinks they chose her, he believes she was exactly what they needed — thoughtful and empathetic. Perhaps all that was needed was a good listener. Just then, Sam approaches, saying he planned to write a paper about their "deuterium friends". Uhura's enthusiasm is genuine, and Jim's a little less so. Sam expresses pride in his younger brother's accomplishments and that the Farragut was lucky to have him... but seems to be waiting for a reply in return. Uhura is confused as to what was going on, and so is Jim; Sam, exasperated, asks if he was seriously not going to offer an apology. Jim asks why he should apologize for being "extremely competent", at which point Sam snaps, telling him to have fun on his "stupid little ship" while Sam gets to work on Starfleet's flagship. Finishing his drink, he leaves it on the table and stomps off.

Kirk apologizes, calling it "Sam being Sam". As he is about to say Sam was frustrating, Spock finishes that sentence himself, before picking up Sam's empty glass and placing it on a waiter's nearby tray. Uhura introduces Spock to Kirk, and offers him a seat at their table, continuing their conversation as the party is in full swing around them.

Those Old Scientists

Season 2

Episode Number: 17

Season Episode: 7

Originally aired: Saturday July 22, 2023
Writer: Kathryn Lyn, Bill Wolkoff
Director: Jonathan Frakes
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokun (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Tawny Newsome (Ensign Beckett Mariner), Jack Quaid (Ensign Brad Boimler), Noël Wells (Ensign D'Vana Tendi (voice)), Eugene Cordero (Ensign Samantha Rutherford (voice)), Jerry O'Connell (Commander Jack Ransom (voice)), Greg Bryk (Captain Harr Karas), Carol Kane (Pelia)
Summary: An accident while investigating a time portal sends Ensigns Beckett Mariner and Bradward Boimler through time from the 24th Century, and Captain Pike and his crew must get them back where they belong before they can alter the timeline.



"Ensign's log, stardate 58460.1. The Cerritos has just entered the orbit of Krulmuth-B, home of the Krulmuth-B portal, one of my all-time favorite portals. We're taking routine portal readings and making sure the portal area is free of any portal problems."

In 2381, the USS Cerritos arrives on the planet Krulmuth-B, home to a portal discovered by Captain Pike and the USS

Enterprise. Ensign Brad Boimler, a self-described "history buff", is excited at the prospect. His friend Beckett Mariner is less so, saying it will just be like any other portal, they are only there to run routine scans, and it hasn't done anything in 120 years. Boimler's enthusiasm is undampened, expecting that perhaps something will happen, and imagines what it would have been like to be part of "Those Old Scientists", saying it would be the closest they would get to Spock or "Numero Una" (which Mariner says no one called her), and standing in the same spot as Uhura. Mariner admits she thinks Uhura "cool as hell", mainly because she had a life outside of work, and suggests Boimler try it. Sam Rutherford shows a similar enthusiasm for "scanning teleron radiation", saying he enjoys scanning new things for his collection, and shares a high-five with D'Vana Tendi for "science". Mariner urges them to head down, and she will brief them on the way; Commander Ransom has placed her in charge of the mission, because he figured it would "bum [her] out" because she finds portals boring.

Beaming to the surface, Mariner points the away team to the "ancient inactive thingy" and tells them to check that it is still non-functional. Boimler and Tendi begin arguing its origins; while

Boimler stands by its being discovered by the Enterprise, Tendi insists it was actually found by an Orion science vessel, and her great-grandmother had been a member of the crew. Boimler questions whether the Orions were actually "doing science stuff" in the 23rd century, inadvertently offending Tendi with the implication that all Orions were pirates. "Some Orions might surprise you," she says with a glare before walking off. Mariner suggests that maybe Boimler, despite knowing "everything about everything", should listen to Tendi. Rutherford gets their attention by detecting traces of horonium, an element not recorded for centuries. Boimler points out that the NX-class used horonium in its hull, which gave it the "right shade of gray". He imagines Spock standing in front of the portal, and earns an unwanted laugh from his impersonation of the famous Vulcan. Mariner tells him to try "living in the now", but Boimler wishes he could have lived in that era. Mariner thinks otherwise, saying it's "no big deal" with disappointing people in their current time, but in that era, she would be disappointing Uhura. Boimler thinks that would be "cool", and Mariner emphatically does not. Rutherford asks Boimler to do his best "Spock pose" for a picture; as he does, the portal unexpectedly activates, pulling Boimler through.

Boimler is thrown out of the portal, right at the feet of Spock, Una, and La'an. Looking up at them, he tells them they look "very realistic", before passing out. Una calls the Enterprise and reports they might have a problem.

"Captain's log, stardate 2291.6. En route to deliver a crucial shipment of grain to a colony on Setlik II, we encountered something more pressing: a time traveler."

The Enterprise is conducting a routine survey of Krulmuth-B on its way to deliver food supplies to Setlik II. Una shows Boimler's combadge to Pike, explaining that it is also a communicator as well as insignia. Pike thinks flipping open the communicator was the best part, and Una agrees she likes theirs better too.

Upon seeing Pike standing over him as he comes to in sickbay, Boimler calls for the computer to end the program, thinking he is in a holodeck simulation. When nothing happens, he reaches out tentatively to poke Pike on the shoulder, and realizes it is not a simulation; he is actually aboard the Enterprise, speaking to the real Pike. He asks for the stardate, and upon hearing the lower number, tries to give some kind of evasive answer to mask his actual origin, but Pike reveals to Boimler's relief that they already know he is from the future. He explains he is from 120 years in the future, to which Pike jokes he doesn't look a day over one hundred. Boimler laughs hysterically at the idea of a "funny captain", then all but jumps off the biobed when Una hands him his combadge, staring at her in shock. Pike introduces him to her and to La'an, the latter of whom escorts him through the ship. Una wonders about the "weird" reaction, thinking he knows something about her future. Pike begins to give a negative answer, then stops, unsure himself.

Boimler excitedly notices the classic S/COMS operating system of the ship's computer, but La'an stops him from pushing any buttons before reminding him of temporal protocols: Firstly, no getting involved in past events; secondly, no sharing knowledge of the future (Boimler promises not to reveal any further information, "Worf's honor", then realizes what he just said); and thirdly, no making attachments. Boimler is unfamiliar with the last, wondering if it is a new addition. La'an admits it is more from her own time travel experience. A small change wouldn't be noticeable to them in the present, but it could alter Boimler's future.

Boimler paces in Pike's ready room, seeing the saddle from Pike's horse. He muses to himself that touching it can't possibly change the future. After laying his hands on it, he decides to do the "Riker Maneuver" to haul himself up into it. He looks up to see Uhura looking at him curiously, and he soon realizes who she is, mentioning that Mariner would be "freaking out" at that. Uhura is unsure what to make of this, but says only she needs the space to work to decipher an entire ancient language. Just then, La'an calls Boimler to the transporter room to return to the surface.

Down below with Spock and Dr. M'Benga, Boimler cannot help but stare at men who are legends in his time, and Spock happens to notice. Boimler also notes M'Benga's "classic" tricorder and asks to hold it. Boimler marvels at how they never truly improved on the design in his time, the only differences being that the kind he was used to was smaller and less likely to explode (which worries the doctor somewhat). Spock calls their attention back to business, asking what Boimler was doing when the portal activated. Boimler moves to where he had been standing, explaining how Rutherford had found horonium traces, which Spock confirms; Rutherford had

taken a holo-image with his camera, which emitted radioisotopes that activated the portal, which makes him think it was "dumb luck". To his absolute shock, Spock laughs at the idea, considering the idea of assigning intelligence to chance "ridiculous". Boimler quietly asks M'Benga if Spock always laughs, or if that was new, to which M'Benga tells him it is definitely new.

Pike then calls from the ship, saying there is a situation; an unidentified ship is closing in, and he wants the landing party back aboard and summoned to the bridge. Ortega thinks the ship might be Orion, and Pike calls for yellow alert, shields up. Una reports that the Orion ship's shields are still down, weapons inactive, though La'an knows some Orion ships are designed to fool sensors. Just then, Spock, Uhura, and Boimler step out of the turbolift. Boimler becomes incredibly excited at standing on the bridge of the Enterprise, "NCC-1701-dash-nothing" (leading La'an to wonder what would come after the dash). As Boimler reaches for the controls on Pike's chair, the captain stops him and has him stand by the nearby railing. Seeing the vessel on screen, he instantly recognizes the ship as a "classic" Orion scout ship, having built one as a ship in a bottle. Uhura reports no response to hails, and Boimler becomes alarmed when Pike orders a photon torpedo spread. Remembering what Tendi told him, he tries to convince Pike it is in fact a science vessel, and that he "happens to know" the ship is peaceful. The Orions finally hail them; it is Captain Harr Caras of the science vessel D'Var. Pike explains they have come to the sector to aid Federation colonies attacked by Orion pirates, and Caras agrees that the pirates give Orions a bad name. Just then, however, Spock detects a transporter signal — the Orions have beamed up the portal. Caras says the science officer is mistaken, but cuts the communication... and the D'Var then goes to warp.

Pike turns to glare at Boimler, who looks distinctly embarrassed.

In his ready room, Pike confesses to Una that he may have made a mistake in listening to Boimler, admitting that it was rare to meet someone who was a fan of his. Una thinks Boimler is terrified of her for some reason, but for Pike, seeing someone looking at him like Boimler made his future not seem so bad (knowing full well what his future will be), but with Boimler now altering time, he feels like he's "trying to stop a toddler from knocking over the furniture". He asks where Boimler is now.

At that moment, Boimler is in the crew lounge, picking up a PADD to input some warp field equations, when he is approached by Ortega and Nurse Chapel, who startle him. Ortega jokes that she hopes he is not inputting any future knowledge, before making clear she is joking. Chapel asks whether he is at the point of "uncontrollable vomiting" from exposure to chroniton radiation, but Ortega's barely-suppressed laughter makes it clear that they are both joking with him. Ortega asks what the future is like, like if they had jetpacks — which Chapel points out they had in their time, but Ortega wonders if they were smaller. Boimler turns the tables by asking what life is like on the Enterprise, if it is non-stop excitement, meeting new alien races that are actually "alien" to them. He calls their time the "golden age of exploration", and is jealous of the fact that they got to live it. Chapel asks about where Uhura is, and Ortega notes she is probably working as usual; she didn't even attend their movie night. Ortega suggests Boimler attend the next one. Boimler wonders if this is something for Pike's birthday, mentioning that in the future, Pike's Birthday is a United Federation of Planets holiday, before again realizing what he said and asking them not to tell La'an. Ortega and Chapel, however, are taken with the idea of giving Pike a birthday party, and promise to give Boimler all the credit. Chapel rises to leave, and Boimler looks up to see Spock in the doorway... with a big smile on his face.

Boimler chases Chapel down the corridor, saying he needs to tell her about Spock. The Spock he's read about is "legendary" for never smiling, laughing, or joking, and he is concerned he did something because he made Spock laugh, and is worried about something he might have done. As Boimler babbles on about what he knows about Spock's history, Chapel stops him short and assures him that it is not his fault; Spock was acting that way before Boimler even arrived. Boimler wonders if it is just a "phase" and he would be back to his "real, serious" self soon... and the look on Chapel's face makes him realize that it was her who was influencing him, and he apologizes profusely. Chapel, looking increasingly upset, admits that she never assumed she would get to influence him forever. Boimler is mortified, and knows he has to get off the ship before he creates any more problems.

On the bridge, Spock explains that he is unable to track the Orion ship, but Boimler offers his assistance. He knows he is not supposed to provide future information, but suggests that he does so, but they just "don't look". Una laughs incredulously at the idea, but exchanging looks

with the others, she wonders if maybe they can... and they proceed to do just that, with Boimler at work under the science panel. He successfully brings the Enterprise to the location of the D'Var. Taking a risk, Boimler pleads with Pike for a diplomatic solution, and reveals what Tendi told him about her great-grandmother being a member of the D'Var's crew; any hostile action could possibly erase Tendi from existence. He knows diplomacy is one of Pike's many strengths, along with patience, forgiveness, benevolence, and "really great hair".

Mustering his aforementioned patience, Pike orders hailing frequencies to the Orions. Spock warns the D'Var is charging its warp coils, and Una orders La'an to lock phasers on their engines. Caras answers, calling it a "remarkable coincidence" for them to be meeting there. Pike explains they may have "accidentally" beamed an ancient portal onboard, and requests its return. Caras makes clear he will not be made to negotiate with weapons locked on his ship, and Pike orders La'an to stand down phasers. Caras wants Pike to "persuade" him to return the portal, and Pike asks how he would like to be persuaded. The Orion asks for a moment to consider, before closing the channel. Pike asks for ideas, immediately shooting Boimler down when he is the first to offer. Boimler speaks in a low voice to Spock, telling him to suggest offering a trade, which Orions would recognize as a gesture of respect, but Pike can hear him clearly despite the span of the room. Spock reports the D'Var is scanning their cargo bay. Then Caras is back on screen, mentioning that he has detected a cargo of tritriticale grain in the Enterprise's hold; giving it to him would be "persuasive". Pike glances over at Una, who gives a slight nod of her head. Pike agrees, to Boimler's relief.

Boimler, Pike, Spock, and La'an return with the portal to Krulmuth-B. Spock's scans show it is nearly depleted of horonium, but has enough for one more trip. Boimler admits the situation didn't turn out to be ideal (indeed, potentially reality-threatening), but he considers meeting them one of the greatest experiences of his life. Pike concedes it had been an "unexpected day" for all of them, but advises for the sake of the future that he not come back. As he steps onto the portal, it activates, and he looks back one last time at the legendary figures. But just as he prepares to step through, Mariner barrels through it and right into him, having leapt through the open portal from the other side to try to rescue him. Remembering what Spock just said about being only enough for one trip, Boimler is horrified. But Mariner, much like Boimler had been when he first came through, looks excited as she realizes she has just traveled through time, seeing the old uniforms, and asking if Uhura is actually there. An exasperated Pike pulls out his communicator, calling for five to beam up.

Back on the Enterprise, Boimler tells Mariner that if she had waited just one more second, he would have come through on his own. She, however, was more concerned about him (particularly that he got "sucked through a vortex" on a mission she was leading), and worried he had gotten killed or trapped in a dystopian San Francisco. Una notes the specificity of their references to Spock. Mariner, meanwhile, admits she was unprepared for how "hot" the younger Spock would be. Boimler, still unnerved by what he has seen in Spock since he came aboard, says simply Spock is "full of surprises". Pike brings them all back to business despite the "recent complication", which also needs a solution. La'an considers one time traveler a security threat, and Una considers two a disaster. Mariner questions Boimler on the Enterprise crew's attitude, as she thought he said Pike and his crew were "cool"; Boimler says they were, but this is serious. Pike asks about the portal; Spock reports it is still functional, but without horonium they cannot activate it. Una adds there have been no sources of horonium in that quadrant for a hundred years. Mariner suggests they just "cook some up". To her surprise, "Hot Spock" (as she calls him) agrees that they could use the matter synthesizer, but at great risk; if it went wrong, the blast would destroy half the ship, and the synthetic material might not work. Una offers a second option: the ancient text on the portal, which Uhura has been locked away in her quarters working on since they arrived. Mariner says she has some linguistics training and offers to help. Pike's better judgment tells him he shouldn't, but he decides to gamble, wondering how much more harm they could do, and so agrees. Boimler questions Mariner's "linguistics training", and she admits she lied, but wouldn't miss the chance to meet Uhura, warning him not to mess it up for her. She then suggests pairing Boimler off with Spock, mentioning that Boimler had taken an elective in material synthesis at Starfleet Academy. Boimler says it had just been "for fun", and thinks Spock doesn't need his help. Spock, however, welcomes the extra pair of hands — if Boimler doesn't mind losing one of them. Spock's smile unnerves Mariner just as much as it did Boimler, and Boimler tells her to just go with it.

Catching up to Mariner in the corridor, Boimler asks why she paired him off with Spock. Mariner scoffs at his protests, thinking working with Spock was one of the "weird boxes" he checked off, but Boimler has worked with Spock, and it didn't go the way he hoped. He admits he wanted to see this time for himself, but now he doesn't want to get stuck in it. He joined Starfleet to help make history, but if they are stuck in the 23rd century, they will be forced to live in hiding, "off the grid", and not make history at all. Mariner doesn't like that idea at all, saying she thrives on "grid". As they speak, Una approaches from behind Mariner, causing Boimler to panic and quickly make his exit. Una wonders why the people from the future are looking at her like she is doomed, to which Mariner says it was because of who she was — and that Boimler has a poster of her pinned on the wall next to his bunk. Una digests this information, then realizes she doesn't want to know, and emphasizes that fact as she walks away.

In Uhura's quarters, Mariner is having much the same reaction to being next to her hero as Boimler had with his, admitting she has always admired Uhura as being both carefree but also a "grade-A translating space adventurer". Uhura finds it unusual that she knows anything about her at all, and is briefly curious about what Mariner does know — then decides maybe not. Mariner refers to her as both a hard worker and fearless in the face of danger (even against threats she hasn't actually met yet), but at the same time one who knew how to have fun. Uhura admits to feeling the pressure now; she is just 22 years old, and has barely done anything worth admiring yet, while at the moment having trouble with a basic translation. At the same time, Ortega is urging her to have more fun, yet she wonders how she can when she has to become "this universally-known, super-translating, unflappable, hard-working badass". Mariner suggests they take a break. Uhura is not one for taking breaks, which Mariner obviously notices before mentioning Starfleet's labor codes — specifically Section 48 Alpha-7, mandating meal breaks at regular intervals, jokingly threatening to put Uhura on report. Uhura is surprised Mariner knows Starfleet codes. Mariner admits there are a few that let one "slack off a ton", and urges her to come along.

In the crew lounge, Mariner makes Orion hurricanes for herself, Uhura, and Ortega, though she admits she had to improvise because there is no Orion deliaq onboard. Ortega has taken a liking to Mariner, calling her a "good bad influence", and ponders inviting her to Pike's surprise party if she is still onboard when it happens. Mariner is all for it, provided she can take pictures and "weird out" her mother with a history book; she then says she was joking, "sort of". Even with a drink in hand, Uhura is still looking over her language studies. Uhura wonders why everyone is obsessed with her taking breaks, believing it isn't the time. Ortega tells her about her time during the Federation-Klingon War, when one never knew when they would be able to rest, so they took their breaks when they could; her work would still be there in five minutes. Uhura finally gives in and sets her PADD down, but Ortega spots something she recognizes. On Starbase Earhart, someone tried to trade her an ancient dom-jot set, with markings similar to what she sees on Uhura's PADD. Uhura is not familiar with the game, but both Ortega and Mariner are, the latter recalling it was a game Nausicaans like to bet on. Uhura realizes Ortega is on to something: the script is similar to an ancient Nausicaan dialect.

In the science lab, as they work on the synthetic horonium, Spock tells Boimler that Chapel was upset about something Boimler said to her about Spock's future, and wonders if he should know. Boimler tries to stay mum at first, but Spock can obviously see that his experiments with Human emotions bother him, and the future that Boimler knows is one where Spock minimizes his emotions. Boimler finally admits this to be so, that the universe needed "Vulcan Spock" for things to be as he knows. At the same time, Spock must stay true to the path he has chosen at that time; if Boimler sways him, his future might be altered. Boimler agrees that this would, unfortunately, be the logical way to see it. Spock then asks if he is ready to activate the synthesizer. Boimler is nervous, wondering if he might indeed lose a hand, and Spock says that they are separating fissile isotopes at high speeds, and puts the chance of an explosion down to a coin flip, mentioning that he has become curious about chance... and asks, with an unnerving smile on his face, if Boimler feels lucky. Boimler most certainly does not, and is even less so as sparks begin flying from the synthesizer. Screaming hysterically, Boimler ducks for cover as the synthesizer explodes. As the smoke clears, Boimler looks at the damage. "I've ruined everything," he laments.

In engineering, Boimler is alone with his thoughts when he is approached by Pelia, who comments on the soothing nature of a properly-calibrated warp core, before identifying him as

one of the "future kids". Boimler replies he might now be one of the "stuck-here kids"—and he's a grown man. He asks if they found more grain for the colonists on Setlik II. Pelia tells him that "more" was never on the table; what the Enterprise was carrying was all they had, specifically made to grow in their biome. Boimler is horrified when he realizes the colonists, who had lived there for generations, will have to be relocated, and wonders if there is anything they could do. Pelia sarcastically suggests finding a time travel device to stop him from "messing everything up", which does not help his mood. He admits he looked up to everyone on the Enterprise, but doesn't feel like he belongs there, wondering how he can fix everything he has done. Pelia tells him she is a Lanthanite, and has lived for thousands of years, and most of the heroes she had known were pretending half the time. One in particular told her that he had always pretended to be someone he wanted to be, until finally he had become that someone.

Boimler sneaks into the shuttlebay, intending to steal a shuttle and make contact with the Orions to get the grain back from them, and is shocked when he spots Mariner in the cockpit. Mariner and Uhura have struck out; the ancient script on the time portal said simply "this is a time portal". Boimler is intending to trade the portal back to the Orions for the grain to help the people on Setlik, saying he is "done" with worrying about the future. Mariner knows the shuttles have separate communications arrays that would make it easier to bypass security and contact the Orions, and compliments "sneaky Boims" on his ingenuity... but also knows he is not one for breaking Starfleet protocol, and so needs an accomplice who won't get caught. Her assessment proves to be wrong, as La'an comes up behind them, phaser in hand; Uhura had been monitoring local communications and blocked the signal.

La'an escorts them to Pike's quarters, where he informs them he is confining them to quarters until they return to Starbase 1. He then asks La'an to let him speak to them alone. Pike points out that for someone who wanted to follow the rules, Boimler broke quite a lot of them, and that Mariner, for all that she was trying to save her friend, was making his situation worse. Mariner takes responsibility, adding that she didn't think Boimler could handle being thrown in the brig by a man he dressed up as for Halloween, which momentarily wrong-foots Pike. He then confronts Boimler about encouraging members of the crew to throw him a surprise party. Boimler justifies it by saying one never knows how many birthdays one has left, thinking on what they know will happen to him in the future. To their surprise, Pike reveals he does know, but his insistence against the party is not about that. He confesses that he and his father had never gotten along — in fact, there were times he "hated his guts" — but this was the first year that he would be older than his father had been when he died. That said, he admits he wishes they could have one more argument, and that his original plan was to finish the mission, spend the day at a fishing cabin on Setlik II's ice moon with a bottle of whiskey, and "have that talk". Boimler is apologetic about Pike's relationship with his father, but asks the captain, when the time comes and he is not there anymore, how many people on the crew will wish to have another day to talk to him? Pike is left momentarily speechless, thinking it over. Boimler admits it was hard to visit the past, and Mariner agrees, saying she didn't want to be there at all. Pike can see how hard it was for them, and idly wonders what it would be like if he were to be sent back in time to Jonathan Archer's Enterprise. Mariner knows that would also "freak out" Boimler, but Boimler has another thing in mind, remembering something he had said to Rutherford, and tells Pike he knows how to get them home.

Boimler begins by explaining he had come with expectations of them from the future, which were unfair to who they were now, and offers an apology... with a limerick. Una tells him to get to the point. Boimler and Mariner explain when they went to the Starship History Museum to visit the Enterprise NX-01, Boimler had been enthralled about the grapplers they used before tractor beams (La'an, deadpan, adds that she also loves grapplers). They mention the use of horonium alloys in the NX class ships' hull. Ortega wonders if they have to find an NX class in mothballs, but both Boimler and Mariner, as well as Pike, know they don't have to; it is a shipbuilding tradition that starships use pieces from namesake vessels in their construction, meaning that there is a piece from the NX-01 onboard their Enterprise. When Spock asks if they know where it is, it is Mariner who answers, adding that she had in fact been paying attention during the tour, something Spock has come to know she did not do often.

The portion in question is beneath a deck plate in engineering, over Pelia's protests about being careful with "her" floor. Ortega takes in the fact that they have been walking over a piece of history for so long, admitting to an admiration for Travis Mayweather, the NX-01's first pilot;

her middle school gym was named for him. Uhura feels similarly about Hoshi Sato, the communications officer, who spoke 86 languages; she wrote three papers about Sato at the Academy. They both realize they sound a lot like Boimler and Mariner, both of whom have smiles on their faces as they see the same thing. Spock agrees, calling it "exhausting".

In the transporter room, Mariner admits to Una that she may have given the wrong impression about the poster Boimler kept of her: it was a recruiting poster, because Una is the "poster girl/woman" for Starfleet in their time. Una thinks she should have led with that part, and asks Boimler if it is true. Boimler confirms, saying that she was a major reason he joined Starfleet. "Ad astra per aspera," he quotes. Una is stunned by this, but goes into professional mode by admonishing them for violating temporal protocols... then thanks them, all the same. Pike and La'an enter and step onto the transporter pad. Spock offers Boimler a Vulcan salute and a parting "live long and prosper". Pike looks amused at Boimler's flustered expression as he orders them to beam down.

On the surface, they encounter Caras and his crew at the portal, having received Boimler's message. Pike explains the message was unauthorized. Caras does not like having his time wasted, and both Boimler and Mariner take the blame for it (with La'an's full support). Boimler sent the message because he didn't want the colonists on Setlik II to starve; Mariner adds they were having a "quarter-life crisis" about meeting their heroes, then comparing themselves to said heroes. As they babble on, Pike brings things back to order by explaining that the device is a time portal, Boimler and Mariner are from the future, and they have to use the portal to send them back. Boimler adds it is to a future where it was offensive to consider Orions as pirates, mentioning that one of their best friends in Starfleet is an Orion science officer, although they mention her using the title "Mistress of the Winter Constellations". That gets Caras' attention; Astrea Tendi, one of his science officers (and D'Vana Tendi's great-grandmother), uses that title. He asks how they could know this, and Boimler and Mariner point out, again, that they are time travelers. Pike speaks up, saying that all they wanted was to use it to send the two future officers home, and as far as history would be concerned, it was discovered by Orions... specifically, Orion scientists. Caras is moved by this, saying it was all he ever wanted. Taking the horonium from the NX-01 portion, Boimler activates the portal. Rutherford and Tendi see them from the other side and prepare to come over, but Boimler and Mariner (and Pike, who has had enough time travel for that day — or ever) call them off. Mariner tells Pike it was good to meet him, before stepping through. Boimler looks back one last time, then follows her in.

As they return to their own time, the portal closes. Boimler tells Tendi she was right about Orions discovering the portal, mentioning her great-grandmother Astrea. Back aboard the *Ceritos*, Boimler looks at the recruiting poster of Una and thanks Mariner for coming back to the "TOS era" to go get him. Mariner knows he picked that phrase up from Ransom, wondering why he always called it that. Boimler mentions it stood for "Those Old Scientists", but they didn't seem quite so old to Mariner. Just then, Ransom walks by and sees the poster of "Numero Una", the "hottest first officer in the fleet", and mentions how he had never seen Mariner so eager for a mission before; it was originally intended for the cadets. Boimler realizes that Mariner fought for the mission so Boimler could go along, but Mariner outright denies it.

Back on the *Enterprise* in their time, Una notes Pike didn't seem very surprised at his surprise party. Pike replies that he knew, and that was why he cancelled his fishing trip, because someone suggested he spend the day with his friends. Uhura mentions that the next movie night might be an Andorian comedy. Ortegas notices that the secret of getting Uhura to relax is to make it feel like work. Spock thinks La'an will be Ortegas' next project, and she is less than enthused about that. Chapel wonders what they've been drinking for the past hour. Ortegas had made Orion hurricanes, as Caras had given them a bottle of real Orion delaq. Pike notes the "interesting flavor", and Una wonders if anyone else feels strange. Uhura asks why everything feels so two-dimensional. Spock knows his arms are not supposed to be so flexible, and Ortegas' eyes feel "huge" to her. "What the hell is in these things?!" M'Benga screams.

Under the Cloak of War

Season 2

Episode Number: 18

Season Episode: 8

Originally aired: Thursday July 27, 2023
Writer: Davy Perez
Director: Jeff W. Byrd
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokun (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Robert Wisdom (Ambassador Dak'Rah), Clint Howard (Commander Buck Martinez), Saida Ali (Jix), Ryan Allen (Polk), Carolyn Das (Lead Pilot), Rong Fu (Jenna Mitchell), Kyle Gatehouse (Lt. Va'Al Trask), Jose Gutierrez-Solana (Ensign Alvarado), Brendan Jeffers (Ensign Inman), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise Computer (voice)), Vanessa Smythe (Harper)
Summary: Captain Pike and his crew welcome a Klingon defector aboard the U.S.S. Enterprise, but his presence triggers the revelation of some shocking secrets.



The USS Enterprise arrives in the Prospero system, which has been under Federation jurisdiction since the end of the Klingon War, to rendezvous with the USS Kelcie Mae, which is carrying a special visitor — a Federation ambassador. The Prospero system's three planets have been fighting one another for years, but the ambassador has managed to arrange a cease fire, and now the Enterprise is transporting the ambassador to Starbase 12. The ambassador is Dak'Rah, a former Klingon general who defected to the Fed-

eration during the war.

"Rah", as he prefers to be called (as formal Klingon names are a "mouthful"), is greeted in the transporter room by Captain Pike, Una, and La'an. Rah comments on the unusual sound of the boatswain's whistle greeting his arrival. Pike explains it as a tradition dating back to Earth's seafaring days, and it had become a custom on the Enterprise for greeting distinguished guests. Rah thinks it similar to "rolling the red carpet out", and Pike confirms, saying he wished to extend every courtesy the ship had to offer. He indicates that La'an is ready to escort him to his quarters, but Rah asks for a tour of the ship, having heard many things about the Federation flagship. Una and La'an exchange uneasy glances at that.

On the bridge, Ortegas — presently holding the conn — is uneasy as well. Uhura lists Rah's diplomatic achievements, including the Summit of Scorpi X, the Klingon Free-Trade Agreement, and the Perez Accords, and believes that a former enemy speaking on Starfleet's behalf has been an effective voice. Ortegas, however, believes it could be a "long con" so the Klingons could steal Federation secrets. She lists his military actions, such as the slaughter at Lembatta V, the siege of Starbase Zetta, and the colony on Athos. Uhura realizes it was a sore subject, but Ortegas

assures her she was right, and she didn't know what he was about — only the stories she had heard, about how he had killed his own men to cover his retreat, and that the Klingons called him the "Butcher of J'Gal".

As she is saying the last, Rah — accompanied by Pike, Una, and La'an — steps onto the bridge. Ortega, realizing what is happening, comes awkwardly to attention. Rah's first comment was to admire the view through the viewscreen. A Bird-of-Prey was not meant to take in its surroundings, and though Klingons would never admit it, he thinks the Federation has better ships. Pike points out that Starfleet ships were primarily intended for exploration, but Rah thinks the Enterprise in particular is "fun to fly". Una indicates Ortega, the senior helm officer. He compliments the ship, and expresses the belief that it was in good hands. Ortega replies that she does her best. Rah continues on with the tour, not wishing to distract the bridge crew from their duties.

In the crew lounge, Spock and Mitchell are attempting to reproduce raktajino, a caffeinated beverage popular on Qo'noS, in anticipation of Rah's arrival. They are still struggling with the coding, as the sample they have made so far has come out cold, and Spock hopes to work out the trouble in time. Mitchell sees Rah enter and tells Spock he didn't have as much time as he hoped. Pike mentions Spock had a "surprise" in anticipation for his arrival. Spock has been attempting to reproduce raktajino. Una explains that Spock had been able to parley with a Klingon captain during a recent mission and procured the recipe; Spock adds that the experience made him curious about Klingon culture. Rah believes there was nothing to be curious about, dismissing his people as warmongers limited by ideology. Spock realizes he has breached a complicated subject, and apologizes. Rah apologizes in turn, saying his distaste for the past colors his words, and offers to try the raktajino. The cup comes out scalding hot, burning Rah's hand, but he takes it in good stride, saying Klingons had a high tolerance for pain. Pike asks for his indulgence, and escorts him to sickbay.

Both Dr. M'Benga and Nurse Chapel look up to see Rah enter, and another nurse applies the dermal regenerator. M'Benga has a particularly stricken look on his face. Seeing it, Chapel offers to handle things, and the doctor enters his office, his heart racing as his memories of J'Gal resurface.

A few years earlier, during the war, Chapel is aboard shuttlecraft 12648 approaching the moon of J'Gal, with the battle raging around them. The shuttle is unable to land due to Klingon disruptor fire, so they have to beam Chapel down while in transit. She is beamed down to a field hospital, where she is greeted by the chief medical officer, Commander Buck Martinez. The hospital is both understaffed and under-equipped, and none of Martinez's requests for resupply have gone through. He also mentions asking "Joseph", who does a lot around there. Chapel requests to meet with the head nurse, but Martinez gives her an unpleasant surprise: she is the head nurse. She had the most experience on anyone on the staff, Martinez explains, and he couldn't wait for roster rotations, so he did what he had to — and it had cost him a case of Romulan ale. The hospital then takes fire, and Martinez tells her one got "used to it"; they scrambled the sensors, but the Klingons knew where they were, and it wouldn't take long for them to get a lock. He calls their camp "Tent City" and tells her to get settled, but she doesn't have long to do that, as the wounded begin beaming in.

Chapel goes right to work, directing patients to where they were needed. One particularly bad case, a man named Alvarado, leads her to call for a doctor, and M'Benga is the one who answers. Alvarado has severe internal bleeding and trauma to all major organs, but they had no internal organ regenerator. Chapel insists something had to be done to keep the wounded until the relief convoy arrived. M'Benga tells her that the worst cases are kept inside the transporter's pattern buffer, and shows her how. Alvarado is preserved inside the buffer, clearing the pad for more patients.

Back in the present, M'Benga is working on one of the biobeds, which has not been working the same since the Gorn attack on Finibus III. Pike enters, asking if he had any Deltan parsley in his stock. M'Benga procures the herb, warning that it was deadly in excessive amounts, but Pike counters that it was delicious in small amounts. M'Benga thinks he could have just called or sent a yeoman, but Pike wanted to check in with the doctor personally, knowing that he and Chapel had both been on J'Gal, where Rah had earned his reputation. A minor protest had broken out during the last transport, and Pike was under direct orders that veterans of the war had to interact with Rah. Pike intends to make the ambassador welcome, but he doesn't wish

to do so at the personal expense of anyone on the crew. M'Benga assures him he's fine, as does Chapel when she enters behind him. Chapel notes the Federation's ultimate goal was to make peace with its enemies, but Pike points out that it was also an organization that waged war with the Klingons. He had his orders from "pretty up high", and as part of the effort, he was hosting a dinner for Rah that evening. M'Benga and Chapel both assure him they will be there.

Once Pike leaves, however, their bluff facade fades; M'Benga in particular looks haunted. Chapel thinks they can still back out, but M'Benga refuses, saying he has had worse than "polite conversation", and doesn't want to give Rah the satisfaction of chasing him from the captain's table. When Chapel tells him "we got this", his memory goes back to J'Gal, where he and Chapel were working to save the life of an ensign named Inman. While in surgery, he goes into cardiac arrest, and with no equipment, M'Benga urges Chapel to manually stimulate his heart. M'Benga tells her "we got this", and urges her to repeat it with him, like a chant. Inman's heartbeat returns, and M'Benga calls for a dermal team to take over, as he and Chapel go to their next patients.

M'Benga heads down the corridor to Pike's quarters, and sees Ortega pacing furiously outside. Ortega is incensed that the "Butcher of J'Gal" is inside being treated "like he's the freaking Dalai Lama". She admits she has a "bad poker face" when she doesn't like someone, and intends to back out. M'Benga asks why she didn't just say no to Pike's invitation, and Ortega asks him the same. M'Benga thinks there is a chance that Rah (whom he identifies first as "general", then as "ambassador") has genuinely reformed. Ortega is certain Rah is pretending, and doesn't want to play along. "Sometimes you pretend something long enough, it becomes the truth," M'Benga muses, before suggesting that they pretend the war didn't bother them... at least for that night. Ortega calls it putting on the "Starfleet face", and M'Benga thinks it a good face... plus, he adds, Pike made jambalaya with Deltan parsley.

Rah is regaling the captain's table about his recent negotiations in the Prospero system when M'Benga and Ortega enter. Spock and Chapel are in the midst of a word game, but Chapel, seeing M'Benga's face, is distracted, and Spock can see that she was under duress. Uhura asks whether it was true that most diplomatic negotiations involved drinking bloodwine in excess. Rah tells her that peace was not a destination, but a journey, a state of mind. Spock offers to help if Chapel wants to talk, but Chapel bluntly tells him to change the subject. Chapel does, however, wish Rah would stop talking about the "amazing peace" he's managed, and Spock does have a solution to that. He approaches, and asks the ambassador if he is familiar with Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, which Rah considers a "most inspired Human masterpiece". Spock admits he would like to hear his thoughts comparing it to the Klingon text *mL'parmaq Qoj*. Rah enthusiastically takes up the topic, mentioning that it was often required reading, and he had been introduced to it when he was seven years old.

M'Benga quietly moves away and pours himself a drink. Chapel asks him to make it two, and thinks it even better when M'Benga says his was a double. She asks why they were even there, and M'Benga replies they were there because their captain needed them. She then asks why it was so hard to explain the war to people who weren't there. M'Benga's memories go back to J'Gal, speaking with Ensign Inman after surgery. Inman looks haunted, saying that General Dak'Rah's men would not let him die. M'Benga urges him to focus on his recovery, and asks how his chest feels. Inman feels like someone had squeezed his heart with their fingers, and M'Benga smiles as he reveals someone did. He asks where the ensign was from, and he replies he was from New Angeles on Luna, which they always just called "the Moon". M'Benga goes to check on other patients, but asks to hear more about it when he returns. Outside, he is approached by Va'Al Trask, a battle-scarred Andorian black ops lieutenant. Trask knows that M'Benga has a history as a fighter, with the most confirmed kills in hand-to-hand combat, and asks for his help to eliminate General Dak'Rah, who had given orders to kill anyone who was not a Klingon soldier. Trask tells him that civilians — Klingon and Human alike — were being killed by his troops. M'Benga replies that he was just a doctor now, preferring to save lives instead of take them. Trask then asks about Protocol 12, the stimulant M'Benga designed, but M'Benga refuses, saying that it turned out filling one's body with adrenaline and pain inhibitors was bad for their health. Trask insists, saying his team needed an edge.

Returning to the present, Rah talks about the peace negotiations to end the Klingon War, and recalls that the chancellor had asked how a Klingon was speaking on behalf of the Federation. Pike thinks it a good question, and asks how he answered. Rah replied that he simply told the

truth of who and what he was, and his belief that J'Gal had changed him. "J'Gal changed a lot of us," M'Benga says quietly, getting Rah's attention. The doctor confirms he had been there during the final conflict, and Chapel also brings up the colony on Athos. Rah believes they both understand his pain, calling the fighting on Athos in particular "without merit", pointless. Pike expresses his belief that war was never the ideal option. Ortegas, distrustful, asks if the stories about how he escaped were true. Rah replies simply that they had all been pushed to their limits, then raises his glass in a toast to the survivors of J'Gal. Ortegas, however, retorts with "tlhIngan maH taHjaj" — "remain Klingon", their battle cry during the war. She recalls hearing it constantly over the comms, and then "boom, all of your friends are dead." Una tells her to stand down, but she remains standing, staring defiantly. Rah is unperturbed, saying he has heard worse, but wishes only to make up for his past deeds, and connect to others who need healing, like her. Ortegas is not having it, and leaves without another word. Chapel says she needs to check on her, and uses that as a reason to leave as well. Pike apologizes, but Rah assures him he bears no grudge. Uhura notes that his philosophy sounded much like Aenar existentialism. Pike, seeing M'Benga's hands clenching on the arm of his chair, quietly suggests he help Chapel to calm down Ortegas. M'Benga, seeing what he is doing, agrees, and makes his way out. As M'Benga makes to leave, Rah catches him by the arm, much to his shock. He mentions that La'an had told him that she and the doctor practiced "full contact mok'bara", and wonders if they might arrange a session. M'Benga says he would check his schedule.

Back on J'Gal during the war, Inman leaves his bed and sits outside, watching the weapons fire. When M'Benga approaches, telling him he should be in bed, Inman asks what they were doing there. M'Benga asks why he joined Starfleet, and Inman replies he had hoped to explore, to learn — none of the things he was doing at present, in other words. M'Benga had joined to learn how to heal people, and calls the war a disease eating at the heart of the Federation. If they allowed the Klingons to conquer every colony in the sector, they wouldn't stop and return to Qo'noS. He tells Inman that they had to remember that they were fighting for those they loved back home, hoping they wouldn't be changed by it... but if they didn't fight, they didn't win, and the "disease" takes over. "We have to fight so the people we love have a chance to live in peace," he says. "That's Starfleet."

Chapel is observing Trask speaking with his men, and M'Benga asks why they were being briefed. Trask and his men are Starfleet special forces, and just received their orders. Chapel observes that for "black ops", they spoke particularly loudly. Starfleet Command is sending Trask and his team to take out the Klingon generals commanding the forces on J'Gal, while a massive assault was staged at the Athos colony to provide cover. "And all they need is meat for the grinder," she sums up grimly. M'Benga is horrified to see Inman approaching, dressed in combat gear; his platoon was leading the charge. M'Benga protests at the idea of a suicidal attack, and believes he can have Inman put down for mandatory convalescence, but Inman urges him not to; he puts his previous questioning of it all to the medication and fatigue. M'Benga can only suggest he stay low and fight hard. Trask brings them all to attention and begins discussing the battle plan.

Back in the present on the Enterprise, Spock apologizes for his part in what occurred the previous evening. Chapel assures him it was not about him, and that their close relationship made him see her "going through something" as his responsibility. Spock replies he understands... then quietly admits he was having difficulty seeing her in such obvious distress, and wants to help, but can see he was only making it worse. Chapel is struggling with her feelings about her service in the war, and becomes agitated when Spock begins talking about his research of the loss of life there. To her, J'Gal was not a statistic; it was what it was. She makes clear she needs personal time, which he now realizes meant personal time away from him.

Chapel's memories go back to the war, to an attack led by General Dak'Rah's forces. Martinez tells her that his men hit the primary power supply, and there were still people in the field who couldn't get out. Chapel knows they only need one operating transporter, and suggests rerouting all the auxiliary power, overriding the redundant systems. Martinez knows it would purge the backlogs, but thinks it would work. As Chapel prepares to initiate the transport, however, she remembers Alvarado was still in the buffer, and if they deleted the backlogs, he would die. M'Benga, however, deletes the backlog and initiates the transport. When Chapel asks what he did, he replies simply that they saved lives. He activates the transporter, with multiple signals being brought in.

In the present, in the ship's gymnasium, M'Benga and Rah prepare to meet for their sparring match. Rah had thought M'Benga would decline the invitation, and M'Benga admits it had crossed his mind, before asking if he was prepared for full-contact. The ambassador replies he is more virile than he appeared, as they engage. M'Benga sees there is more to him than what was on the surface; Rah replies that most people saw him as a Klingon, a bringer of death, and did not believe he had reformed. M'Benga thinks Rah has put his past behind him, and in fact made it look easy. Rah, however, doesn't think one can put something like J'Gal behind them, but instead learn from it. They grapple again, ending with Rah hurling M'Benga to the mat. He proposes that two direct combatants from the war working together would send a powerful message. M'Benga wonders if that means Rah wanted to be friends, and Rah thinks more allies than friends. He knows the combat veterans on the ship look up to M'Benga, and believes others in Starfleet would as well. He proposes that M'Benga join him at his next peace conference, and together they could advance Klingon-Federation relations.

M'Benga thinks he asks a "big favor", but still wants to know about Rah, asking if it was true that he did kill his own men. Rah explains that the other leaders considered all tactical options to be viable. M'Benga points out the casualties on Athos were largely civilians, a fact Rah is well aware of. Rah admits that indeed, he did kill his own men, himself standing against three Klingon warriors, because he was appalled by the atrocities. One of them, Commander Kiff, had fought the hardest and nearly killed him, but he chose to fight on for the nameless victims of the war, to stand up for what was right, and that was why the Klingons called him "the Butcher of J'Gal". As they grapple and stand face-to-face, M'Benga says that J'Gal had changed them both, and that war changed people. After parting, Rah calls their session "invigorating", and looks forward to the next.

Returning to his quarters and setting the sonic shower to full, M'Benga grapples with his memories of the war, remembering how the casualties kept coming in — even children. He remembers how Trask referred to him as "the Ghost", needing people who could operate swiftly and silently to eliminate J'Gal's Klingon commanders — General Gra'val, Commander Kiff, Captain Ruh'lis... and General Dak'Rah. But Trask and most of his men were killed, as well as Ensign Inman, his throat slashed. Filled with determined anger, M'Benga grabs a d'k tahg from Trask's belt in the morgue and swiftly makes his way out, intending to fulfill the mission himself.

In his ready room, Pike is reviewing M'Benga's personnel file when Una enters, giving Pike a course through the Chantico Nebula that would bring them to Starbase 12 the following day. She urges him to get Rah off the ship as soon as possible, as his presence was affecting the morale of the crew. Pike wonders how they can represent a Federation believing in peace if they said that some people weren't allowed to make up for their past. Una agrees in the abstract, but points out that some members of the crew were directly hurt by Rah's actions during the war and might not forgive so easily, and doesn't believe it fair to ask them to just let it go. "Federation or not, everyone is on their own journey," she says. Pike gives the order to change course.

On J'Gal, M'Benga finds his supply of the "Protocol 12" stimulant when Chapel approaches, saying people were looking for him. Seeing the combat gear and the d'k tahg, she realizes he is going out into the field, and M'Benga confirms, saying someone had to finish the mission. Chapel points out that J'Gal was burning, and the convoy was on its way. He hands her a tracker to allow her to follow him, but urges her not to beam him out until she has to. He had hoped to avoid coming home changed by the war, but now realizes it was impossible. Chapel tells him to go, save as many as he could, and when he found who was in charge, to make them pay. He hands her his supply chest and a vial of "Protocol 12", saying if the Klingons breached the wire, she should use it to get out.

In the Enterprise sickbay, M'Benga is examining the contents of that same chest when Rah enters, saying his time had been cut short, and they didn't have as much time as he hoped to get to know one another. M'Benga curtly replies he was okay with that, thinking he does not need to know more than he already does, and tells him to leave. When Rah begins to talk about J'Gal, M'Benga angrily tells him to stop, thinking that Rah was there for validation. As Rah insists that he not let hate cloud his judgment, M'Benga rounds on him and reminds him that he gave the order to consider anyone not a Klingon soldier as the enemy. Rah admits this, but says he has been trying to make up for his transgressions.

M'Benga then corrects him by saying that it was Ruh'lis, not Kiff, who had fought the hardest, holding M'Benga back while Rah made his escape. M'Benga had already killed Kiff, and then

stabbed Ruh'lis through the throat with his captured d'k tahg. M'Benga accuses the former general of turning him into a monster, and that he, not Rah, was the real "Butcher of J'Gal". Rah is stunned that he had never said anything before then, leaving Rah to take the credit. M'Benga replies that unlike Rah, he was ashamed of that night, while Rah admits to being ashamed of his cowardice. M'Benga had searched for Rah on J'Gal, and now here he was, in M'Benga's sickbay, using the blood on M'Benga's hands to make himself a saint. Rah only wanted Starfleet to trust him, and points to the work he has done; if Starfleet knew the truth, his work would be undone. M'Benga tells him his work was built on lies. Rah says the Federation had been there for him at his lowest; he needed the Federation, and they needed him. M'Benga opens his old storage chest, showing the d'k tahg still there, and asks why Rah felt he had to come, why he couldn't have just left the doctor alone. Rah pleads with him to give him a chance to help heal him. The two briefly struggle, M'Benga shouting that Rah was a war criminal, just as Chapel enters... and Rah falls to the floor, dead, the d'k tahg stabbed into his chest.

Chapel brings the bloodied d'k tahg to Pike and La'an, revealing she had seen the whole thing. Rah had wanted to talk, but M'Benga wasn't having it, saying he didn't want to be involved with a war criminal, which led Rah to attack him, leading M'Benga to kill him. The DNA analysis of the blade shows the blood of the four warlords killed by the "Butcher of J'Gal": Gra'val, Kiff, Ruh'lis, and Dak'Rah. In addition, both M'Benga and Dak'Rah's fingerprints are on it. Pike is stunned that Rah would be capable of attacking M'Benga, and Chapel believes this just went to show that no one could truly know what goes on in anyone's heart.

In sickbay, M'Benga is still working on the biobed when Pike enters. He tells the doctor that La'an is submitting her report, and there is likely to be an inquiry. He asks how long they had known each other, and M'Benga admits "too long to count", which leads Pike to think that M'Benga could talk to him about who really started the fight. M'Benga assures him he didn't start it. Pike considers the whole situation complicated, but M'Benga is not so sure. He points out that Rah was living a lie, and that the Federation Diplomatic Corps had known who and what he was, and still let him represent them. He knew that Rah himself, not just his men, had been responsible for the killing of children, and asks Pike what he would do if M'Benga told him he had started the fight then. Pike points out that even in such cases, there was due process, and that was why they had tribunals; the Federation believed in second chances. M'Benga asks about justice, about the victims, and whether everyone deserves to pay for their actions. Pike turns it around by asking who decides who pays, and who gets redemption. M'Benga concedes they have known each other a long time, and see eye-to-eye on most things, but points out that Pike had not lived his life, and had the privilege of seeing the best in people. For M'Benga himself, however, he knew that some things could not be forgiven. He emphasizes he did not start the fight, but is still glad Rah is dead. Pike absorbs this before he leaves.

M'Benga finishes the repairs on the biobed, but knows it was only a matter of time before it breaks down again. As he walks away, the biobed malfunctions again...

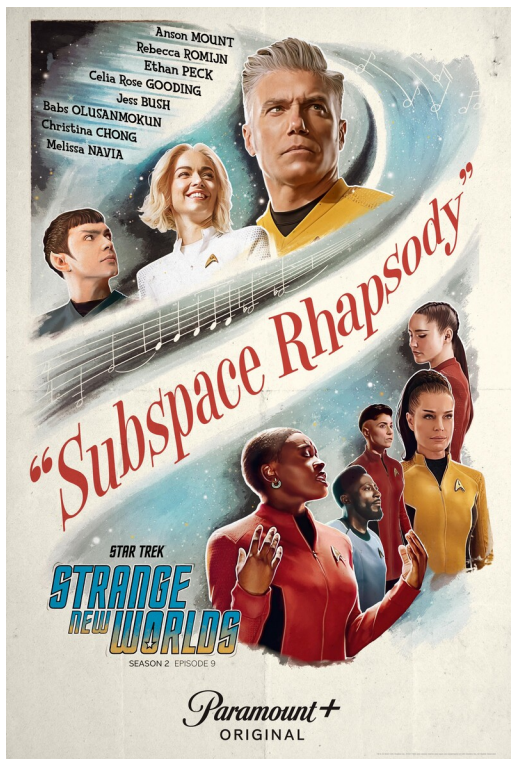
Subspace Rhapsody

Season 2

Episode Number: 19

Season Episode: 9

Originally aired: Thursday August 03, 2023
Writer: Dana Horgan, Bill Wolkoff
Director: Dermott Downs
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokin (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Paul Wesley (Lieutenant James T. Kirk), Melanie Scrofano (Captain Marie Batel), Dan Jeannotte (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk), Bruce Horak (General Garkog), Carol Kane (Pelia), Rong Fu (Jenna Mitchell), Daniel Ryan-Astley (Starfleet Member)
Summary: An accident with an experimental quantum probability field causes everyone on the Enterprise to break uncontrollably into song, but the real danger is that the field is expanding & beginning to impact other ships — allies and enemies alike.



The USS Enterprise is on the site of an unusual phenomenon — a naturally-occurring subspace fold, which Spock has theorized could triple the speed of subspace communication. Unfortunately for Uhura, the amount of computer power required for his experiment has resulted in her having to essentially become a switchboard operator: a call from Captain Batel to Captain Pike, another from Dr. Roger Korby for Nurse Chapel, Una checking on Lieutenant James Kirk's imminent arrival from the USS Farragut, and Spock in engineering asking if she was ready to continue their experiment. Once these were all sorted, Uhura takes a deep breath to recenter herself, before going right back to work.

Batel is planning her and Pike's first vacation to Crivo, a planet Pike considers "touristy". Batel is enthusiastic, wanting to see the Planetary Museum, and take day trips to the Glass Islands and Smoke Lakes. She sees the look on Pike's face and stops short, wondering if something was wrong. Pike muses that perhaps the timing was bad, and he was uncertain he could get away. Batel wonders if there was something he wasn't telling her, and he assures her there wasn't, but suggests delaying for a few days. Batel curtly agrees, before

closing the channel.

In the transporter room, Una is joined by La'an, explaining that the Farragut is sending Kirk to the Enterprise so that the crew can "show him the ropes"; the captain's note adds that Kirk is "full of talent" but still has "one or two issues" to work out before beginning his commission as the ship's first officer. La'an thinks punctuality is one of those "issues". Una notes that La'an is

unusually energetic, to which La'an simply replies she is waiting for their guest to run a security clearance. Una, however, thinks La'an came in "hot", but La'an again assures her she was fine, and it was standard procedure. Una activates the transporter, and welcomes Kirk back to the Enterprise. He notices his brother Sam is absent this time; Una explains Sam was busy, and they'd find him later. Kirk thanks Una for agreeing to do this, even if he felt it was not fully necessary. Una recalls that when she took her commission, she spent a week shadowing Pike, which made all the difference for her, and she hopes it will do the same for him on the Farragut. Kirk then notices La'an, and reminds her she owes him a drink. La'an is flustered somewhat as she leads him to undergo his security clearance.

In sickbay, Chapel paces nervously, wondering if the message from Dr. Korby would be another rejection notice. Ortega tells her to forget the Vulcans and their Science Academy, and Chapel seems to go along with this... but this fellowship she had applied for was different, knowing of Korby's reputation. So does Dr. M'Benga, who calls him the "Louis Pasteur of archaeological medicine". Thousands of people apply for his fellowship every year, and only five are accepted. Mustering her nerve, Chapel reads the message... and her expression tells both Ortega and M'Benga that her application was accepted. M'Benga jokingly wonders what she would do without her for three months, and Ortega points out he wouldn't be the only one who would miss her. Chapel's joy is dampened somewhat as she realizes she had to tell Spock. In engineering, Spock is engrossed in the experiment, having failed twelve times in sending a message through the subspace fold. Pelia corrects that to thirteen, and asks why he thinks this particular fold would lead to faster communications. Spock explains that frequencies propagate through it three times faster than normal. With their current subspace relay network, Uhura adds, it takes weeks to get a message across; if their experiments work out, they could have real-time communications across thousands of light years... only so far, no one has heard them. As she returns to work, Uhura begins humming a tune, which gives Pelia an idea: sending music through the fold. They were attempting to communicate through a medium with different laws of physics, so perhaps fundamental harmonics were the answer. Pelia off-handedly says it was "just a thought"... but Spock thinks it may be an excellent one, and leaves Uhura to pick the song. Uhura hopes subspace was a "fan" of the Great American Songbook, and selects the song "Anything Goes".

The music does indeed cause a reaction, but not what they had been hoping for. A wave of energy projects from the fold and goes through the entire ship, momentarily disorienting everyone on the crew as it passed through them — including Pike, in the turbolift on his way to the bridge. As he exits, he asks Mitchell what hit them. She reports that there were no other ships in the sector, and that whatever it was had come from the fold. Pike calls to Uhura in engineering, asking for a full report. When Uhura checks in with Spock, he surprises her by singing his response, that the intermix chamber and containment field generator were stable ("Status Report"). Pike wonders where the music is coming from, and Ortega knows it was not anywhere on the ship. Spock apologizes for the most "confounding" thing, that he appeared to be singing his answers. Sickbay seems to catch onto it as well, as M'Benga and Chapel musically report no injuries, "just the mundane".

The musical "infection" spreads to the bridge, as Ortega, then Una, then La'an and Kirk sing their status reports from their stations. The entire crew is caught up in the music, which ends at that moment with Pike's question: "But why are we singing?"

"So... that happened," Pike comments, meeting with the crew in the ready room. La'an reports "musical outbreaks" all over the ship. Kirk had assumed it was something the crew had rehearsed, but he had sang too — as did M'Benga, who emphatically says he did not sing. Pike knows the surge came from the subspace fold, and asks Spock to help him "connect the dots". Spock explains how they had sent a series of transmissions, the last being a song. When asked why that would make them sing, Spock theorizes the frequency of the transmission dislodged a quantum uncertainty field, asking them to imagine an area of space where multiple quantum uncertainties collapse so rapidly and randomly that new realities were created; in one of which, the inhabitants sang uncontrollably. La'an sarcastically wonders if that meant more uncertainty or if the crew would just "poof into bunnies", to which M'Benga makes clear he'd prefer not to be a bunny, either. Spock assures them that was unlikely, but they may not be done with the music: the Enterprise has become tethered to that particular improbability field, and attempting to fly out would widen it. Pelia notices it looks similar to a zipper, and asks if it could work like a

zipper. Pike, seeing where she's going, points out that zippers work both ways, and asks if they could somehow "zip" the improbability field back into the fold. Spock thinks it possible, if they combined shield harmonics with the Heisenberg compensator and connected it to the navigational deflector to generate a beam. Una knows this would have to be done manually. Pike tells them to go ahead with it, not knowing how the singing would affect them and wanting to "nip it at the bud". Kirk jokingly adds that Spock explained that very well, and that he almost understood it.

The "zipper beam" had to exactly match the resonance of the fold, and Spock asks Uhura about the frequency of the song she sent through. As he observes, he sees the message from Dr. Korby to Chapel, asking if it was about her recent fellowship application and if the news was "favorable". Uhura reminds him that she didn't look at personal correspondence, and Spock agrees it would be unethical. Uhura realizes that Spock and Chapel have become close, and Spock confirms that it would be accurate to say they had become "more than colleagues". Uhura jokes about that "classic Vulcan romance" she had heard about, then more seriously asks why he doesn't ask Chapel about it. Spock admits that their communications have run into challenges. Una calls to report that she and Kirk were in place, and asks Uhura for the harmonics data.

Down below, Kirk is working inside a Jefferies tube connecting the relays. "One down, only four to go," he says. Una wonders if he was running out of steam already. Kirk recalls what his brother told him about her, calling Una the first officer that he should be — keeping distance from the crew because of the hard decisions a first officer had to make. Una is aware of her reputation, and has elected to take a more "hands-on" approach. Kirk recalls the last first officer on the Farragut definitely kept his distance. Una calls that style of command a "first mistake" — and the music starts again as she advises Kirk to "connect to [his] truth" and interact more with his crew than other first officers would ("Connect to Your Truth"), admitting (as she normally wouldn't) that she would enjoy taking to the stage regaling others with her renditions of her favorite composers, Gilbert and Sullivan. They actually begin to dance their way to the next access tunnel, while La'an watches from around the corner.

La'an, caught in the music herself, questions how Una was able to express herself ("How Would That Feel"), and wonders if she can do so herself, wondering how it would feel to be "flying blind", but has "never met that part" of her. Her words harken back to the time she first met Kirk — in an alternate reality, then shifted back in time to the 21st century — and fantasizes about having a future with him, taking out the wristwatch she had used during that incident. As the song ends, she comes to a realization, one she shares with Pike in the turbolift to the bridge: the singing was causing them to express highly personal emotional information about themselves. Pike is somewhat dumbfounded at the idea that their emotions could constitute a security threat, but La'an is sure that they do. Seeing how uncomfortable she is, Pike hopes that whatever she's holding back doesn't turn out that way, and assures her Spock and Uhura have a plan.

As they arrive on the bridge, Spock reports that the Heisenberg compensator is adjusted with the shield harmonics to collapse the musical reality. Uhura calls to "Lieutenant Kirk", saying she wasn't rushing him, but then says she was. It turns out both Lieutenant Kirks are down in the transporter room making the final adjustments, and both acknowledge. Jim thinks she was talking to him, but Sam points out that he worked there. Jim reminds him that it wasn't his department, that he was in xenanthropology; Sam counters that he had been assigned at Jim's request, because Jim "missed" him. Jim activates the deflector, and Una gives the order to fire the "zipper beam".

At first, it appears to be working, but the fold releases another surge of energy, and Ortega sees it was not "zipping". Pike asks Spock what happened, but Spock is unable to determine. Just then, a message comes in from the USS Cayuga. "When it rains," Pike says, given who the captain is. He tells Spock to determine what happened, before he has Uhura put Batel through. Batel seems to be caught up in the same trouble as the Enterprise, as her message is a rhyming request to have a private conversation, in a more discreet location, about their cancelled vacation... and then sings her apologies for the rhyming. Pike tells her he will have to call her back, but Batel musically cuts him off, accusing him of always running away ("Private Conversation"). Pike is now caught up in the song as well, questioning why all the blame was on him, and about to make a comment about her choice of vacation destination... before he catches himself, not willing to speak so in front of his crew.

As their musical duel goes on, trying to have a "private" conversation about their frustration, La'an springs into action and cuts the communication. Pike is confused as to why he was admitting all of what he had just sang, and La'an again emphasizes it was a security threat. He then asks why the Cayuga was also affected, and Spock reports that the improbability field was expanding across the entire subspace communications network... affecting all of Starfleet.

Una has been in contact with Admiral April, who informed her that the improbability field has spread to twelve starships, and let her know (in a "surprisingly beautiful baritone", she adds) that he would like it stopped. Pike asks if they had any idea why the reality was compelling them to confess their deepest emotions; at that, La'an glances slightly behind her at Kirk. Uhura has a theory: because it was a musical reality, they were following the rules of musicals — and Una, a fan of musicals, knew that characters in musicals began to sing in them when their emotions were so heightened that words would not suffice. Pike suggests firing a spread of photon torpedoes to "bring the curtain down" on it, and Spock thinks it possible; a sufficient explosion of matter and antimatter could untether them from the improbability field and release the affected ships from the musical reality. However, he wants to test it in a controlled environment first, in case the results are more explosive. La'an has the thought (and Kirk completes it) of beaming subatomic particles from the fold itself. Una points out it requires cross-targeting, which makes it a two-person job. Kirk replies that they had "two persons" right there.

To Una's surprise, La'an refuses the assignment, and Una knows that was not like her. La'an confesses that she wasn't feeling like herself; indeed, none of them were. Una realizes that she is uncomfortable of the idea of singing to Kirk, seeing how she was acting around him. La'an, struggling to admit it without actually admitting it, says that "hypothetically", she might have feelings for him, and those feelings pose a potential space-time security risk. La'an finally gets fed up enough to say she should just tell him and "stop being a child" about it, before it got out of her control. The music starts again, Una telling her about the people who would complicate her life ("Keeping Secrets"), and urging her to tell as much of the truth as she felt, "no drama". She deactivates the artificial gravity in the ready room, dancing in the air with La'an as the song continues. Throughout the ship, others in similar situations are contemplating their own futures with someone else: Chapel in sickbay, Spock in engineering, and Pike in his quarters. Una also points out her own skill with keeping secrets, and how that skill didn't serve her anymore.

La'an joins Kirk in the transporter room, trying to beam the particles aboard; he apologizes for sounding as if he was giving orders, as he was on her ship. The molecular imaging scanner was unable to focus the signal, but La'an adds power, and they successfully bring the particles aboard. Kirk then transports them to engineering, then sarcastically notes it was "exciting", though not as exciting as Spock and Uhura getting to blow them up. Nonetheless, he thinks he and La'an make a good team, and should work together more often. La'an, struggling to put her feelings into words, is unable to go much further before the ship violently rocks.

The test explosion nearly destroyed engineering, leading Pike to wonder what would happen if they applied it to the fold itself. Spock's analysis shows that the effect would spread through the entire subspace network, destroying everything; he compares it to soaking the improbability field in kerosene and holding a match to it. Uhura then picks up an incoming transmission, and Pike warns her not to answer for fear of spreading the musical "infection" further. Spock triangulates the source, detecting a signature coming in at high warp speed, with Klingon encryption. Una thinks the last thing anyone would want is singing Klingons. Pike orders Uhura to send a proxy message through Starfleet Command, telling them to turn back immediately. The ship has stopped hailing, but Uhura gets a message... the improbability field has already hit them.

Uhura plays back the message. The sender identifies himself as General Garkog of the Imperial Klingon Defense Force, who tells them that their "evasion" has raised suspicions, and that the Klingons have identified the source of their "dishonor". He intends to destroy it, and warns the Enterprise not to try to stop him. Pike realizes they were going to fire on the subspace fold.

In the ready room, Pike informs the crew that Garkog's ship will arrive in two hours. Spock warns that if the Klingons completed their mission, everyone affected by the improbability field would be destroyed. "So, just the entire Federation and half the Klingon Empire," Kirk sums up. Pike knows they had to be stopped at all costs, and asks for options. Una points out that firing first constituted an act of war, but Pike sees little option, asking if they could just disable the Klingons' disruptor cannons; La'an adds the torpedo launchers. Una asks La'an for a tactical strategy, and La'an gets on it... then asks Kirk to join her. Pike then turns to Spock and Uhura,

asking what the odds were of disabling the improbability field before the Klingons arrived. Spock concedes they were not good with the data they had. Pike suggests he find new data, urging them both to fix the problem; they were applying old rules to a new reality, and suggests finding a different tempo — and fast.

Spock proposes using the songs themselves, and the frequency they generate, as their means. He wonders how to generate a song, and Uhura reminds him that per the musical rules, songs began during moments of intense emotion... and she looks into the open door of the crew lounge, where Chapel is sharing a drink with Ortegas and Sam Kirk, celebrating Chapel's fellowship. Chapel thinks it strange to celebrate in a time like this, but Sam is adamant that their lives shouldn't end every time the ship got into trouble, and Ortegas agrees, saying they were there to celebrate her win. Spock approaches then, believing the toasting indicated good news about her fellowship. He then asks why she didn't tell him, and whether it was intentional or merely an oversight. Chapel wants to discuss it later, but Spock insists that he was "merely curious". On cue, the music starts, and Uhura begins her scans. Chapel thinks that it was a "distant dream", and that she confesses she didn't think she deserved it, but now the fellowship saw her as "one of their own" ("I'm Ready"). The entire crew in the lounge get in on the spontaneous singing and dancing that breaks out, celebrating Chapel's accomplishment, and Chapel admitting that she was ready for it, and "won't fight it" if she had to leave Spock behind. Spock stares for a moment, then quietly leaves.

La'an and Kirk are going over the specifications of the K'tinga-class they will be facing; Una had suggested the disruptor cannons and fore torpedoes, but La'an knows the aft launchers were the ones to worry about. Kirk elects to trust her aim, then asks about that "thing" she was going to tell him before in the transporter room. La'an finally admits, choosing to do so before she broke out into a 17th century sea shanty, that she had met an alternate version of Kirk. Kirk, though admittedly not one for rules, can see that La'an is about to break a big one. La'an tells him that the other Kirk had met her "real" self, because he had never heard her name or all it stood for, and admits she had liked it, liked the way he had looked at her. In his eyes, she could see who she wanted to be, someone who could feel, take chances... and make connections. Kirk asks if he was anything like that other self, and La'an at first says no... but then adds that yes, because she likes the way he looks at her, too. Kirk confesses that he had felt a similar connection when she first called him, but reminds him he was not that other Kirk. His life was complicated, perhaps not by time travel, but he admits he was in a "sometimes" relationship with Carol Marcus, a scientist on Starbase 1. He thinks La'an would like her, and that they were both very similar in that they were dedicated to their work. He admits he didn't tend to stay in one place for very long, which was a growing problem... because Carol was pregnant. "Wow," is all La'an can say to that.

Uhura finds Spock in engineering, clearly looking unhappy; he has been analyzing the data they gathered. He is looking for a pattern, and finding none. He adds that he was not expecting Chapel to be definitive about ending their arrangement. Uhura knows relationships are difficult. For Spock, who is half-Human, he feels things differently compared to most Vulcans. He knows Chapel's decision was logical, but nonetheless he is hurt. Taken by the music, Spock admits he had "betrayed" his core philosophies for the relationship with Chapel, and did not intend to make the same mistake again, accepting that he was "the ex" ("I'm the X"/"I'm Ready (reprise)"). The song done, he apologizes and leaves Uhura alone — to also be taken by her own song ("Keep Us Connected"), searching for the pattern, and knowing she would have to do the work alone. She also thinks on her memories of her parents and elder brother, and the shuttle crash that killed them, as well as her meeting with Hemmer when she was a cadet. She wonders if her life is meant to be lived "solo", and engrossed in her work in keeping people connected. She then has a realization, seeing the patterns repeating, and soon accepts that she was "good with solo".

Uhura reports to Pike that the singing causes spikes in the quantum probabilities in the field. She believes if they can get the spikes to 344 giga electron volts, it would shatter the field. Spock enters then, seeing she has found the improbability-breaking event they need to escape. Pike asks how they can do it, because two more K'tingas have been detected en route. Uhura reminds him that song could be communal — used in worship and celebration. With just a solo with some backup vocals — Chapel and Uhura earlier — they generated a spike of 40 electron volts. Uhura thinks they require a "grand finale", needing melodies and harmonies with tone ratios with both algorithmic and logarithmic balance on a mass scale. To do that, the entire crew

had to sing together. Spock sees the challenge of inspiring all two hundred members of the crew to spontaneously break into song, and Pike thinks this a job for a communications officer. Uhura protests that she couldn't get the entire ship to sing, but Pike is confident that she can, as she sees the connections between them, while all the others can see was empty space.

Pike addresses the entire ship, remarking on the challenging situation, and how they may not have all been acting like a crew, but he believes they would get through together by following one voice: the voice of the Enterprise. He then turns it over to Uhura, who introduces herself, saying that while they may not all know her, she knows them. She used to think of herself as always alone, but not on this ship; each of them were connected as a crew. As she brings up the improbability field levels, Pike silently encourages her to keep going. Uhura asks what the odds were of all of them being there, together, on that ship and at that moment. The music begins, and Uhura guides them all in singing of their purpose — "to protect the mission" — and the others in the crew join in ("We Are One"), some praising Uhura for saving them, and Kirk believing it will be thanks to them that he makes captain. Little by little, the crew gets in on the music, singing and dancing through the corridors, as the electron volt levels rise. But even with the entire crew, it was not enough, and Pike has Uhura hail the Klingons. Garkog resists at first, then he and his crew break into a pop number threatening vengeance "at the ends of [their] mek'leths". The Enterprise and the three Klingon ships spin in a musical pattern as the song reaches its climax, hitting the required levels, causing the subspace fold to explode in a shower of light. The Enterprise crew celebrates the success, though some tensions remain. For a start, Pike has Uhura hail the Klingons, thinking they had to "mend some fences".

In the crew lounge afterward, La'an is alone with her thoughts when she is joined by Una. La'an admits she told Kirk the truth, and it didn't go well; while it hurt, she is still glad she took the chance. She thinks that maybe she could be someone who took chances more often. Una toasts to that.

In his quarters, Pike is preparing dinner for himself and Batel, who is still incensed about the fact that Pike had lied to her about not wanting to go to Crivo, asking why he didn't just say he hated it. Pike tries to deflect at first, before he confesses that it sounded like his nightmare; he preferred something simple and quieter, like camping. Batel reminds him that they wouldn't work out if he couldn't be honest about something as small as a vacation, and he is apologetic. However, she has "good news and bad news" — they had more time to plan their "compromised vacation", as she had been called on a priority one mission. Pike jokingly asks how he could be sure she wasn't the one making excuses now, and Batel answers that when she comes back, they can go somewhere they both want to go, adding that she wouldn't do any camping unless it had room service. Pike calls it a deal.

All Federation ships return to normal, and Spock was able to again engage in diplomacy over bloodwine, entering the bridge feeling the effects of another hangover. As Pike enters, he thinks it might be an idea to share their findings with non-Federation ships as well, and suggests opening a channel to anyone who's nearby. As she gets to work, she begins humming the song she had sung to herself in engineering, causing the bridge crew to all look over at her. "Sorry, earworm," she says apologetically, before returning to work.

Hegemony (1)

Season 2

Episode Number: 20

Season Episode: 10

Originally aired: Thursday August 10, 2023
Writer: Henry Alonso Myers
Director: Maja Vrvilo
Show Stars: Anson Mount (Captain Christopher Pike), Ethan Peck (Science Officer Spock), Jess Bush (Nurse Christine Chapel), Christina Chong (Chief Security La'an Noonien-Singh), Celia Rose Gooding (Cadet Nyota Uhura), Melissa Navia (Lt. Erica Ortegas), Babs Olusanmokun (Medical Chief Dr. M'Benga), Rebecca Romijn (Una Chin-Riley / Number One), Bruce Horak (Chief Engineer Hemmer)
Guest Stars: Martin Quinn (Lieutenant Montgomery Scott), Adrian Holmes (Admiral Robert April), Melanie Scrofano (Captain Batel), Dan Jeannotte (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk), Carol Kane (Pelia), Rong Fu (Jenna Mitchell), Matt Jensen (Ensign Appel), Alex Kapp (USS Enterprise / Cayuga Computer (voice)), Noah Lamanna (Chief Jay), Warren Scherer (Adult Gorn)
Summary: When the Enterprise investigates an attack on a colony at the edge of Federation space, Captain Pike and the crew face the return of a formidable enemy.



The USS Cayuga is in orbit of the colony world of Parnassus Beta, just outside Federation space, which was designed to look like a small town in the old Midwestern United States. The Cayuga has been tasked with assisting the colony, including improvements to its agriculture and providing necessary vaccines for the population. Nurse Chapel has hitched a ride with the Cayuga on her way to begin her fellowship with Dr. Korby, and is assisting with the vaccinations. Captain Batel asks Chapel if Korby didn't mind her

showing up early, and Chapel points out that in space, no one ever showed up when they meant to. With the vaccinations done, Chapel returns to the ship to prepare for the next day.

Batel then receives a message from Captain Pike. Batel asks what she owes the pleasure of the call, and Pike jokingly asks if he needed a reason, thinking they were past it. Batel agrees, but points out she was busy, and Pike promises to patch it through her yeoman next time. When she asks about him, he replies that he wasn't breaking into song every ten minutes, which he calls a "minor victory", and asks about the people on Parnassus. Batel calls the situation "complicated", as Federation membership would help them, but they were wary of having a target painted on their backs. When Pike begins to offer a suggestion, Batel reminds him that she did this for a living. Pike confesses that he misses her. In the midst of their banter, the signal is lost. Pike quietly looks down at the Opelian mariner's keystone she had given him.

The communication problem appears to be on Batel's end, as she checks with one of her officers, Ensign Doug Appel. But when Appel calls the Cayuga, all he receives is static. Their attention is then drawn to a shuttle, on fire and out of control, streaking across the sky before crashing near the town. When Batel urges Appel to immediately get the Cayuga on comms, the

ensign's attention is drawn to the sky, and Batel looks up to see a massive vessel entering the atmosphere. "My God," is all the captain can say, as the colonists scramble to find shelter.

Aboard the USS Enterprise, Uhura picks up a distress call from the Cayuga. Batel reports that her ship and the colony are under attack by the Gorn. Pike immediately orders Ortegas to make for Parnassus Beta with everything she's got, and has Uhura open a secure channel to Admiral April. April explains that the Federation is at a dangerous level in their relations with the Gorn Hegemony. Pike knows the Gorn have been assembling their forces on the border for some time. April reminds him that the situation was happening outside Federation territory, and the incident could spark a war between the Federation and the Gorn, something Starfleet wants to avoid. Pike believes the Gorn attacked them first, but April reminds him that the colony was outside their jurisdiction, though they still need to find out why the Gorn attacked. The admiral thinks it safe to say that they don't understand the Gorn. Pike, however, has had encounters with them before, in the attack on Finibus III and answering the distress call of the USS Peregrine on Valeo Beta V, and condemns them as monsters. April points out that "monster" was a term used to describe what one didn't understand, but Pike counters that sometimes a monster was just a monster. April needs Pike's utmost caution, ordering him to conduct reconnaissance only to avoid further aggravating the situation. He knows Pike and Batel are close, and hopes it would not color the captain's judgment. As Ortegas reports from the bridge that they were coming out of warp, Pike curtly assures the admiral that it wouldn't.

Pike orders yellow alert and has Ortegas take them slowly around the far side of the moon. As she does, the crew stare in stunned silence as they see that the Cayuga has been destroyed.

As the Cayuga's wrecked saucer floats in front of them, Pike reminds his crew not to make assumptions. He has Spock scan for life signs and escape pods, hoping some of the crew survived. But Spock's scanners are not functioning; Uhura reports the same for communications, and Una for transporters. Spock detects a counter-frequency coming from the planet, negating all scans, communications, and transporter signals between the Enterprise and the surface. When Pike asks what was causing it, La'an replies that she believes it to be an interference field deployed by the Gorn during invasions to prevent communications or movement. Pike urges his crew to "think harder"; when he spoke with Batel, she was on the surface along with much of her crew, and believes she may still be there. Una reminds them of their training: Starfleet protocol dictates that the survivors should make any effort to call out to anyone who was listening. Uhura knows the comms and sensors are down, but they still have line of sight. Una agrees, thinking they could communicate with lights, fires, or smoke signals. Pike orders them to start observations.

Just then, Spock detects an incoming warp signature, and Pike orders red alert. Spock identifies the ship as a Gorn hunter; Pike orders phasers readied, but to hold for his command. Uhura then receives a message from outside the interference field, sent by Starfleet: they had received a message from the Gorn. The Gorn have sent an image with a demarcation line through the Parnassus system, and Parnassus Beta was on their side of the line. Starfleet has ordered the Enterprise to maintain their side. Pike calls the command crew to his ready room.

Pike assesses the situation: the Enterprise is holding to their side of the demarcation per Starfleet's orders, and the Gorn have thus far held to theirs... but he believes the survivors of the Cayuga may be on the Gorn side, and he does not intend to leave them there. Pike makes clear that he is not ordering anyone to accompany him; he will accept volunteers, but is prepared to go alone if he has to. Spock is the first to speak up, wanting to help Batel and Chapel, hoping the latter made it safely down. Uhura feels the same way, and Una believes they all do. Pike thanks them, but believes they were better off remaining on the ship to help prevent a war. Sam Kirk enters, offering his services; he admits he had been "scared out of [his] wits" when he first saw the Gorn on Valeo Beta V, but wants another chance to study them up close. La'an asks if he is prepared to do so with a phaser. "How else would we determine how best to kill them?" he replies. Dr. M'Benga, remembering the incident on Finibus III, also volunteers to aid that "study". La'an admits she would like them dead as much, if not more, than the rest of them. However, they didn't know what they were walking into on the surface, and she believes phasers would not be enough.

Pike, however, has something that might help. He calls transporter chief Jay, asking if the in-ship transporters were still functional. Jay confirms they are, and Pike has them beam crate 32 to his ready room. Since the Gorn began building up on the border, Starfleet created the "Gorn Protocols" for any future contact with the hostile species. Ortegas thinks of it as a "break in

case of Gorn" situation. The new protocols include improved phaser harmonics to counter their defenses, improvements to their tricorders to better detect the notoriously stealthy creatures, and nitrogen grenades that would be lethal to the cold-blooded reptilians. Ortega points out the "supercool toys", but asks how they were supposed to get on the surface to use them, with the Gorn hunter waiting to attack anything that crosses the demarcation line. Pike admits he doesn't know, but thinks that maybe all they needed was to plot the right course.

Una has been running projections, including using the Parnassus moon as a slingshot and adjusting to a synchronous orbit to avoid being on the same plane as the hunter ship, but no matter what, the hunter would still detect them. Ortega points out the debris field from the Cayuga, pointing out that the Gorn weren't shooting at that because they already had. Pike thinks it a "brilliant" idea — if they could make a shuttle appear as just a piece of debris, the Gorn might let them through (at which Ortega worriedly latches onto the "might"). Pike confesses he could use her expertise, reminding her that she had been pestering him for months about joining a landing party. Ortega confesses she had, and half-jokingly wonders why.

The shuttle, disguised with scrap metal to make it appear like space garbage, drifts through the Cayuga's debris field, and into the scanner range of the hunter ship. Ortega remarks that they should look as dead as the rest of the Cayuga — then apologizes to Pike, realizing what she just said. Pike assures her that it was alright, and his nerves were also on edge as well. The landing party also includes La'an, M'Benga, and Kirk. From the Enterprise, the crew watches as the shuttle drifts right by them, Uhura calling it an "old zombie movie trick"; at Spock's confusion, Una explains that if one appeared dead, the zombies would go right by them. The shuttle moves out of the Enterprise's range; Pike and his team were now on their own, as the shuttle enters the atmosphere. As it begins an uncontrolled descent, spinning towards the surface, Pike worriedly asks if Ortega planned to activate the engines; Ortega chides him for "back-seat driving", and replies she is waiting until they were below 1,500 meters to stay off the Gorn's scanners. After a tense moment, Ortega brings the shuttle level, before reminding Pike he had been a test pilot at one point, and refers to it like "riding a bike". Pike, however, thinks Ortega had been born for this.

Spock continues to try and find a way to scan for lifesigns aboard the Cayuga. He had theorized there was a frequency gap in the interference field, but had thus far not been able to find it. Una quietly tells him she doesn't think anyone is alive over there, but Spock insists that spectrometric analysis indicates pockets of oxygen on board. Una would never tell Spock not to hope, and adds her hope that Chapel is alive. Spock admits things did not end well between them, and they had fought — "all things that seem trivial in the face of death," he believes, but still wishes to apologize to her. Una assures him it had not been his fault. Spock looks back to his scans, noting that the Cayuga rotated every two hours, and their sickbay would be coming up, thinking perhaps a targeted scan would show signs of life. Una has the computer magnify the Cayuga's saucer; Mitchell is the one to see that the sickbay is gone. Spock can only stare in stunned silence.

On Parnassus Beta's surface, Pike sees a strange device that didn't appear native. La'an identifies it as Gorn technology, remembering seeing one on the breeding planet she had escaped from; her brother Manu believed it was a beacon intended to trap passers-by. As the landing party movies up, Pike guesses it was the source of the interference field, and La'an's scans confirm it. He asks if she detects any hostile signals, and she reports negative. As they move through the streets, they see evidence of fighting; La'an speculates they made their stand in the buildings, and lost. Pike knows there were five thousand people in the colony, and is sure there were survivors. La'an is not so sure, but Pike reminds her that she made it out. Kirk detects a signal coming in, and La'an confirms, size indicating a Gorn youngling. The team takes cover, and observe the creature stalking through the streets. Pike gives the signal, and La'an downs it with one shot, proving that the new phaser settings worked. Kirk wonders why they sent out a youngling to face them — if the Gorn knew they were there, why just send in the babies? But La'an knows that the Gorn spread their eggs throughout a planet to soften it up for conquest; the interference field tower was just "locking the door". M'Benga notes the youngling looked hungry, which meant no food left. Pike, however, remains optimistic that there are survivors still in hiding. Kirk's scanners pick up dozens more younglings coming their way, and Pike directs them to the nearby barbershop, deactivating the lights on their combat vests. The younglings run through the streets, a pair of them stopping to eat the corpse of the one La'an had killed.

Back on the Enterprise, Uhura finds Pelia working on recalibrations to the deflector shield, clearly distracted by her work. Uhura is trying to find how the Gorn are blocking communications, and has a "crazy" theory. As Pelia goes on, Uhura hems and haws a bit, but Pelia urges her not to "sugarcoat" it, as she loved crazy theories.

On the surface, La'an expresses confusion: the younglings should be fighting for dominance, not working together. Pike thinks that if she didn't understand them, that meant there was something about the Gorn they had yet to discover, and thinks they should try reaching out to them instead of trying to fight them. "Ever the optimist," La'an observes. He thinks sometimes hope is a choice, and La'an recalls he had said the same thing about Finibus III. Pike admits he was saying it more because he felt he needed to hear it, and that was why they were there. La'an assures him that Batel is tough, joking that if she could handle Pike, the Gorn were a "piece of cake", earning a smile from the captain. Ortegas reports the Gorn have moved on, and Kirk's scanners have picked up an anomalous signal coming from down the street — a Human, seeming to prove Pike's optimism about survivors.

Inside, however, all they find are further signs of a massacre, and La'an thinks whoever is being picked up is not being careful enough. Kirk's scanner follows the signal to a device in a nearby cardboard box. As they observe it, a force field comes up to block them in, and a young man in the uniform of a Starfleet engineer pokes his head out a door, noting with a Scottish accent that they were not Gorn. The device was a trap designed to put out auditory and pheromonal life signs at regular intervals, as well as heat signatures and most scanners, to lure in the Gorn. He lowers the force field, and identifies himself as Lieutenant junior grade Montgomery Scott. La'an doesn't recognize his name from the Cayuga's manifest, and Scott explains he was from the USS Stardiver, a solar research vessel studying solar flare activity one system over when the Gorn attacked. The Stardiver was destroyed, along with the whole crew; Scott had escaped in a shuttle, jury-rigging the engines to flee to the Parnassus system, where he "hid in plain sight". M'Benga commends his escape as resourceful (Ortegas adding "mysterious"), and Scott admits he can be "creative" when being hunted by flesh-eating lizards. Pike somberly asks if any of the Cayuga's crew survived.

Scott leads them to a nearby diner, where they find Batel and some of her crew, worse for wear but alive. Batel calls Pike an idiot for coming there, believing he had been safe, and now he was stuck there with them. Pike has a shuttle that can take them to safety, but all the survivors wouldn't fit on a shuttle, and the Gorn would blow them out of the sky if they tried. Pike asks if Scott had any ideas. Scott explains that the Stardiver had been in the Shangdi system when the red supergiant star began emitting coronal mass ejections, which Kirk compares to being like solar flares but much more violent. As they were observing the CME activity, the Gorn swarmed them, and Scott thinks something about the flares lured them out. Kirk compares it to locusts having their swarming instincts triggered by environmental factors. He remembers how La'an had showed them how they communicated through light, and wonders if they had some ingrained sensitivity to it. Batel considers this critical intelligence, something they could use against the Gorn, and Pike sees it as all the more reason to get off the planet. Pike asks Scott about "hiding in plain sight"; the engineer explains that he made a quick assessment of Gorn scanning technology, and determined how they were able to identify one another, similar to Starfleet transponders. He essentially made his own Gorn transponder using equipment from the Stardiver's solar array, but by the time he was able to activate it, the shuttle had already taken damage and was leaking antimatter. Parnassus Beta had been the closest planet he could set down on, and it happened to be right in the Gorn's path. Pike asks if he could build another such device. Scott replies he couldn't, unless they had a Hubble K17C Stellar Assessment Array he could cannibalize.

As M'Benga tends to the wounded, Ortegas offers her help. The doctor had thought she would be planning the next stage of the attack, but Ortegas is leaving that to the captains. She asks if he had heard about Chapel; he had been told she had gone back to the Cayuga, something they both considered "not great" to hear. M'Benga adds that if Chapel were there, she would tell them to pick up the pace, and Ortegas impersonates her saying that "these people wouldn't heal themselves". M'Benga thinks it a good impression, but Ortegas thinks Chapel did a better one of her.

Aboard the Enterprise, Spock picks up two more Gorn hunter ships, still on their side of the line. Una remarks that the red alert couldn't get any redder. Just then, Uhura and Pelia

arrive, asking to speak with them. They had been able to triangulate the location of the source of the interference field on the far side of Parnassus Beta, a non-native structure that they think the Gorn had brought with them. Una points out that weapons fire would provoke a response, but Pelia reminds them that the Gorn did not respond to space debris. Uhura thinks a piece of debris large enough to survive re-entry into the atmosphere could be used to crash into the machine, destroying it and restoring their communications and transporters. Una realizes that there is such a piece: the Cayuga's saucer. Pelia comments if she had given such a response in her class at Starfleet Academy, she would have given her an A-plus (earning a slight glare from Una), before explaining that with the right calculations and a few well-placed retrorockets, they could make it appear like the Cayuga's orbit was decaying naturally, and with a few last-minute adjustments, they could make sure it hits exactly where they need it to. Uhura adds that by the time the Gorn realize what had happened, the survivors would be rescued. Spock thinks placing the retrorockets would be nearly impossible for a Human, and volunteers to do so, agreeing with Pelia and Uhura that it was their best chance. Una is concerned that Chapel's fate is affecting his judgment. Spock concedes he is upset, but has not given in to grief yet. Logic dictated that they did not know the fate of either Chapel or Captain Batel, and until they did, the best chance to save them was to disable the Gorn interference field. Spock also points out he is the only member of the crew who could accomplish the task; if it was to succeed, it had to be him.

Inside the barricaded diner, the survivors are trying to get as much rest as they can. Pike awakens, and quietly makes his way to the door. But Batel is right behind him, asking what he was doing. Pike is hoping he can reach Scott's shuttle and find his transponder, so they could fly out of there. Batel reminds him they couldn't take everyone, but Pike is focused on one problem at a time; if he can rescue anyone, it was a start. Batel does not intend to let him go alone, and is not fazed by his attempting to stare her down. Scott also awakens, saying they would need his help, as it was fused in, before apologizing for eavesdropping — though he points out it was not his fault they were trying to have a secret conversation near his sleeping spot. Pike invites him along, and Scott, though terrified, admits he owes it to the crew of the Stardiver. He suggests taking the back way and not using the street to avoid the Gorn. Pike tosses him a phaser pistol, in case they don't.

Aboard the wreck of the Cayuga, the oxygen was reaching critical levels. Chapel comes back to consciousness and rises unsteadily to her feet, briefly bringing back life support systems for at least another hour. She collects what supplies she can find, before she sees something outside the nearby viewport: The Enterprise. Picking up her flashlight, she begins shining the light through it, trying to show she was there. Meanwhile, Spock, in an environmental suit, propels onto the hull and begins setting the retrorockets. Chapel sees Spock float by, and tries to reach out to him. Desperate, she heads to the nearby EV suit bay, and grabs one of her own.

Inside Scott's crashed shuttle, he finds the device fused to one of the consoles. He asks for Pike's help to pry it off, while pointing Batel to an ion welder somewhere nearby. As Batel searches, the clicking sound of a nearby Gorn youngling gets their attention. Trying not to act too hostilely, Pike raises his hands.

Suited up, Chapel hears signs of someone attempting to access the computer. Thinking it might be Spock, she approaches... but the long tail alerts her to the presence of a Gorn adult, and she quickly hides. She looks to a nearby frozen Jefferies tube, and gets an idea...

Inside the crashed shuttle, Pike, Batel, and Scott wait anxiously to see what the youngling will do. Staring them down for a moment, the youngling snarls and retreats through the breach, and Batel blocks the entrance. Batel thinks they got "lucky", that the Gorn chose not to attack, and is not in the mood to question it. Scott thinks he may need to break the quadrocoupler and use another from the shield array, if he hadn't already.

Spock sets the last of the rockets on the exposed bridge of the Cayuga, and the saucer begins to move. Through the reflection on the glass of the console in front of him, Spock sees the tail of the Gorn adult behind him, and draws his phaser. The Gorn lashes out with its tail, disarming him. Just then, Chapel enters, much to Spock's surprise, and just as the Gorn attacks. Spock tackles the Gorn, but it gains the upper hand, and prepares to crush Spock's helmet. Chapel scrambles to grab Spock's phaser, and after a tense few seconds manages to get a hold of it, firing a shot that gains its attention. Spock grabs a piece of the bridge railing and smashes it through the Gorn's own helmet, causing it to die from oxygen loss and extreme cold.

On the shuttle, Pike asks Batel why the Gorn backed away from her. When she gives evasive

answers, Pike persists; he had come all this way to save her, and asks her to trust him with the truth. She rolls up the sleeve of her jacket, showing that she has been infested with Gorn eggs. It had occurred the day before, and the eggs mature in a day and a half.

Spock and Chapel float through the open bridge of the Cayuga as the saucer begins to burn up in the atmosphere. As they float back to safety, Spock takes Chapel's hand as they watch the saucer's descent.

Batel urges Pike to leave her behind, knowing what will happen when the eggs matured; she does not want to endanger the survivors or Pike's crew. Pike is not willing to let her die, but Batel reminds him that it was what Hemmer had done. Pike points out that Hemmer had not given them a choice, and Batel gives him hers: She intends to use the device on his shuttle, fly it into the Gorn tower to destroy it, and allow Pike and the others to beam back to the Enterprise. Scott then looks up, telling them to hold onto something. As they watch, the Cayuga's saucer crashes into the Gorn tower.

With comms and transporters restored, Spock calls for two to be beamed aboard; realizing he had found Chapel, Una happily acknowledges, then signals Pike. He has them track the colonists first, then orders three to be beamed directly to sickbay, asking Pelia to be there as well. As Spock and Chapel beam aboard, Una sends Chapel to sickbay and asks Spock to come to the bridge. Spock begins to apologize, but Chapel asks him to save it, as they would have time later.

Chapel is waiting in sickbay as Pike, Batel, and Scott beam aboard. A relieved Pike hugs her, glad to see her alive. He tells her that Batel had to be immediately sedated because of the Gorn infestation; Chapel also knows they'd need a stasis field. Batel tells Chapel to kill her if there is any sign that it could not be stopped. Pike has no intention of giving up on her, and Chapel assures him that she doesn't either. As Pelia enters, Pike introduces her to Scott, whom she knows as "Scotty" — one of her best students at the Academy, who also received some of her worst grades. He is carrying the device he salvaged from the shuttle to hide them from the Gorn.

Pike goes up to the bridge, where Una informs him that a Gorn destroyer has entered orbit, leaving them to face four ships; Spock reports more on the way. Pike tells Uhura to get an urgent message to Starfleet with the intel they had learned, then calls for the survivors to be beamed up. Spock, though, is not detecting any Human life signs on Parnassus Beta... and residual transport signatures indicate that they had been beamed up by the Gorn.

The three hunter ships begin opening fire, causing severe damage. Chapel has Batel sedated and in a stasis field, and Pelia and Scott quickly make their way to engineering. Uhura receives a priority signal from Starfleet, ordering their immediate withdrawal. Mitchell protests, as the Gorn have their people. Pike stares out the viewscreen in stunned silence, as Una asks him for orders.

To be continued...

Actor Appearances

A

Alden Adair	1
0105 (Barjan T'Or)	
Shawn Ahmed	2
0106 (Ensign Shankar); 0107 (Ensign Shankar)	
Carlos Alborno	1
0109 (Buckley)	
Saida Ali	1
0208 (Jix)	
Ryan Allen	1
0208 (Polk)	
Jim Annan	1
0202 (Una's Father)	
Sage Arrindell	3
0103 (Rukiya); 0106 (Rukiya); 0108 (Rukiya)	

B

Yetide Badaki	1
0202 (Neera Ketoul)	
Dennis Barham	1
0203 (Chess Player #1)	
Dana Beddoe	1
0102 (Alien Daughter (Deleb))	
Anna Claire Beitel	1
0202 (Young Una)	
Carla Bennett	1
0101 (Palion Aide #2)	
Michael Benyaer	1
0205 (Sevet)	
Angela Besharah	1
0104 (Thandie)	
Reed Birney	1
0204 (Luq)	
Catherine Black	1
0202 (Una's Mother)	
Avaah Blackwell	1
0106 (Linnarean Guard)	
Jon Blair	1
0101 (Kiley Guard #2)	
Lindy Booth	1
0106 (Alora)	
Peter Bou-Ghannam	1
0101 (Palion Leader)	
Mathieu Bourassa	1
0110 (Romulan Subcommander)	
Greg Bryk	1
0207 (Captain Harr Karas)	
Nicolas Van Burek	1
0201 (Klingon Extremist)	

C

Anjuli Cain	1
0205 (Yellow / Blue (voice))	
Marianne Castro	1

0101 (Shuttle pilot)	
Bessie Cheng	1
0101 (Eldreth Aide #2)	
Ava Cheung	2
0104 (Young La'an); 0109 (Young La'an)	
John Chou	1
0101 (Kiley Scientist #1)	
Eugene Clark	1
0202 (Commander Chiv)	
Trevor Coll	1
0204 (Afraid Crewmember)	
Andre Colquhoun	1
0103 (Probasco)	
Eugene Cordero	1
0207 (Ensign Samantha Rutherford (voice))	
Belinda Corpuz	1
0108 (Patient)	
Amber V. Cull	1
0102 (Alien Mother (Deleb))	

D

Joseph Daly	1
0101 (Eldreth Aide #1)	
Jessica Danecker	1
0109 (Cadet Chia)	
Carolyne Das	1
0208 (Lead Pilot)	
Myles Dobson	1
0101 (Vulcan Waiter)	

E

Izad Etemadi	1
0201 (Burly Inspector)	
Runa Ewok	1
0108 (Runa)	

F

Rong Fu	8
0101 (Lt. Jenna Mitchell); 0106 (Lt. Jenna Mitchell); 0108 (Jenna Mitchell); 0110 (Lieutenant Commander Jenna Mitchell); 0201 (Jenna Mitchell); 0208 (Jenna Mitchell); 0209 (Jenna Mitchell); 0210 (Jenna Mitchell)	

G

Tarek Gader	1
0204 (Shirtless Crewmember)	
Chandra Galasso	1
0101 (Lieutenant)	
Kyle Gatehouse	1
0208 (Lt. Va'Al Trask)	
Jaimee Joe Gonzaga	1

0101 (Terminal Jockey #2)
 Daniel Gravelle 1
 0103 (Ensign Lance)
 Nicky Guadagni 1
 0202 (Admiral Jovas)
 Jose Gutierrez-Solana 1
 0208 (Ensign Alvarado)

H

Kaylee Harwood 1
 0104 (Lt. Parker)
 Ali Hassan 1
 0110 (Commander Hansen Al-Salah)
 Emma Ho 2
 0109 (Oriana); 0201 (Oriana)
 Ian Ho 1
 0106 (First Servant)
 Adrian Holmes 4
 0105 (Robert April); 0201 (Admiral Robert April);
 0202 (Admiral Robert April); 0210 (Admiral
 Robert April)
 Bruce Horak 1
 0209 (General Garkog)
 Beth Hornby 1
 0202 (Guard)
 Michael Hough 1
 0107 (Remy)
 Clint Howard 1
 0208 (Commander Buck Martinez)
 Jennifer Hui 3
 0102 (Ensign Christina); 0105 (Ensign Christina);
 0109 (Ensign Christina)
 Prosha Hussein 1
 0103 (Sick Crew Member #1)
 David Huynh 1
 0204 (Zac Nguyen)
 Phi Huynh 1
 0107 (Pirate #1)

J

Andrew Jackson 1
 0201 (Captain D'Chok)
 Dan Jeannotte 8
 0102 (Lieutenant George Samuel "Sam" Kirk); 0106
 (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk); 0109
 (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk); 0110
 (Lieutenant George Samuel "Sam" Kirk); 0205
 (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk); 0206
 (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk); 0209
 (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk); 0210
 (Lieutenant George Samuel 'Sam' Kirk)
 Brendan Jeffers 1
 0208 (Ensign Inman)
 Matt Jensen 1
 0210 (Ensign Appel)

K

Adelaide Kane 1
 0203 (Sera)
 Carol Kane 6
 0201 (Pelias); 0203 (Pelias); 0206 (Pelias); 0207 (Pelias);
 0209 (Pelias); 0210 (Pelias)
 Alex Kapp 12
 0102 (USS Enterprise Computer); 0103 (USS En-
 terprise Computer); 0105 (USS Enterprise Com-
 puter); 0107 (USS Enterprise Computer (voice));
 0108 (USS Enterprise Computer); 0201 (USS

Enterprise Computer (voice)); 0202 (USS En-
 terprise Computer (voice)); 0204 (USS Enter-
 prise Computer (voice)); 0205 (USS Enterprise
 Computer (voice)); 0206 (USS Enterprise Com-
 puter (voice)); 0208 (USS Enterprise Computer
 (voice)); 0210 (USS Enterprise / Cayuga Com-
 puter (voice))

Kyle Kass 1
 0201 (Kr'Dogh)
 Jesse James Keitel 1
 0107 (Dr. Aspen)
 Teddy Kellogg 1
 0109 (Lieutenant Duke)
 Ron Kennell 1
 0105 (Vasso)
 Sandy Kerr 1
 0101 (Starfleet Scientist #1)
 André Dae Kim 8
 0101 (Chief Kyle); 0102 (Chief Kyle); 0103 (Chief
 Kyle); 0104 (Chief Kyle); 0105 (Chief Kyle); 0106
 (Chief Kyle); 0109 (Chief Kyle); 0110 (Trans-
 porter Chief Kyle)
 David Kirby 1
 0101 (Palion Aide #1)
 Mia Kirshner 1
 0205 (Amanda Grayson)

L

Joel Lacoursiere 1
 0101 (Kiley Guard)
 Noah Lamanna 4
 0201 (Chief Jay); 0203 (Chief Jay); 0204 (Chief Jay);
 0210 (Chief Jay)
 Caeden Lawrence 1
 0203 (Security Ensign)
 Dana Levenson 1
 0101 (Newscaster)
 David Leyshon 1
 0203 (Chess Player #3)
 Andrew Locke 1
 0101 (Terminal Jockey #1)

M

Cihang Ma 1
 0201 (Livian)
 Matthew MacFadzean 1
 0110 (Romulan Commander)
 Adam Maros 1
 0106 (Kier)
 Thom Marriott 1
 0102 (Shepherd Captain)
 John Marshe 1
 0201 (Thug)
 Luke Marty 1
 0203 (Police Officer)
 Yvette McKoy 1
 0105 (Vulcan officiant)
 Roderick McNeil 1
 0107 (Stonn)
 Sean Meldrum 1
 0203 (Denobulan Cadet)
 Emeka Menakaya 1
 0204 (Tiko)
 Johnathan James Mitchell 1
 0104 (Young Jaivarn (voice))
 Oscar Moreno 1
 0104 (Crewman Zuniga)
 Etan Muskat 1

0101 (Starfleet Scientist #2)

N

Tawny Newsome	1
0207 (Ensign Beckett Mariner)	
Simon Northwood	1
0204 (Rak)	

O

Jerry O'Connell	1
0207 (Commander Jack Ransom (voice))	

P

Daniel Pagett	1
0101 (Kiley Scientist #2)	
Graham Parkhurst	1
0105 (Lt. Dever)	
Ellora Patnaik	1
0205 (T'Pril)	

Q

Jack Quaid	1
0207 (Ensign Brad Boimler)	
Martin Quinn	1
0210 (Lieutenant Montgomery Scott)	
Brian Quintero	1
0203 (Store Security Guard)	

R

Ian Rayburn	1
0110 (Groom)	
Michael Reventar	1
0206 (Lieutenant Saul Ramon)	
Chris River	1
0110 (Maat Al-Salah)	
Cameron Roberts	3
0103 (Manu Noonien-Singh); 0104 (Manu Noonien-Singh); 0109 (Manu Noonien-Singh)	
Jamillah Ross	1
0201 (Lukata)	
Daniel Ryan-Astley	1
0209 (Starfleet Member)	

S

Samer Salem	1
0201 (Inspector Gilan)	
Gia Sandhu	7
0101 (T'Pring); 0103 (T'Pring); 0104 (T'Pring); 0105 (T'Pring); 0106 (T'Pring); 0107 (T'Pring); 0205 (T'Pring)	
Megha Sandhu	1
0110 (Bride)	
Warren Scherer	1
0210 (Adult Gorn)	
Robin Schisler	1
0203 (Woman in Store)	
Carolyn Scott	1
0110 (Praetor)	
Melanie Scrofano	6
0101 (Captain Batel); 0110 (Captain Batel); 0202 (Captain Batel); 0204 (Captain Batel); 0209 (Captain Marie Batel); 0210 (Captain Batel)	

Rachel Sellan	1
0101 (Woman in Elevator)	
Liza Seneca	1
0109 (Captain Alice Gavin (voice))	
Ana Shepherd	1
0110 (Ferragut Crew Member)	
Makambe Simamba	1
0108 (Adult Rukiya M'Benga)	
Randy Singh	1
0203 (Institute Guard #1)	
Desmond Sivan	1
0203 (Young Khan)	
Vanessa Smythe	1
0208 (Harper)	
Graeme Somerville	1
0202 (Vice Admiral Pasalk)	
Hannah Spear	1
0201 (Jen)	
Alex Spencer	1
0201 (Greynax)	
Iain Stewart	1
0202 (JAG Defender)	

T

Ryan Taerk	1
0205 (Durik)	
Mish Tam	1
0203 (Chess Player #2)	
David Benjamin Tomlinson	1
0202 (Zus Tlaggul)	
Kimberly-Ann Truong	1
0202 (Illyrian Assistant)	

V

Tahirih Vejdani	1
0105 (K'Tyll)	

W

Abbas Wahab	1
0201 (Ror'Queg)	
Sophia Walker	1
0107 (Fran)	
Sophia Webster	1
0104 (Fig)	
Torri Webster	1
0105 (Ensign Zier)	
Noël Wells	1
0207 (Ensign D'Vana Tendi (voice))	
Paul Wesley	4
0110 (James T. Kirk); 0203 (Captain James T. Kirk); 0206 (Captain James T. Kirk); 0209 (Lieutenant James T. Kirk)	
Shannon Widdis	5
0101 (Bridge Crew); 0106 (Bridge Crew); 0107 (Bridge Crew); 0108 (Bridge Crew); 0109 (Bridge Crew)	
Carlisle J. Williams	1
0105 (Brax)	
Allison Wilson-Forbes	1
0203 (Agent Ymalay)	
Laura Wilson	1
0201 (Stell)	
Robert Wisdom	1
0208 (Ambassador Dak'Rah)	
Matthew Wolf	1
0110 (Engineer)	
Kara Wooten	1
0108 (Crimson Guard)	

Christopher Wyllie 1
0203 (Grey-Suited Man)

— Y —

Russell Yuen 1
0201 (Commodore Tafune)