

Bill Justman

STAR TREK

\$
Shatner will be unhappy
Too many principals
"gags"

"PLATO'S STEPCHILDREN"

Written by

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STAR TREK
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STAR TREK

TEASER

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE

Moving slowly through space. Far below lies the planet Platonius, its rugged mountainous terrain reduced to sandbox proportions.

INT. BRIDGE - CLOSE GRIDDED SCREEN

The screen shows the planet.

ANOTHER ANGLE

SPOCK is manning the instrumentation, KIRK observing.

KIRK

How many more sweeps?

SPOCK

Three, sir.

HELEN LENNOX, Kirk's lovely yeoman, COMES INTO SHOT with a ~~small~~

YEOMAN LENNOX

The Star Fleet transmissions you requested.

Kirk nods, starts to look them over. A sharp DING-DING-DING is heard from the scanner. Spock looks over at the spectroscope, which is now blinking on and off.

SPOCK

Kironide deposit.

KIRK

Record coordinates.

As Spock hits buttons, the mountains come in close, snow-covered, awesome. The coordinate spectroscopic scanner shows the color patterns. Yeoman Lennox, studying them, hesitates, then turns to Kirk.

ANGLE - KIRK, YEOMAN LENNOX

YEOMAN LENNOX

Captain, you'll probably think I'm stupid, but what is kironide anyhow?

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

Mr. Spock.

ANGLE INCLUDING SPOCK

SPOCK

Kirnode is a particularly potent and long-lasting source of power, very rare. It is readily convertible from electrical to mechanical energy.

Yeoman Lennox nods, smiles to Spock, and is stopped by LT. UHURA as she exits. The DING-DING grows more intense.

ANGLE - LT. UHURA, YEOMAN LENNOX

UHURA

(to Lennox with a friendly smile)

I'm glad somebody asked.

YEOMAN LENNOX

(disappointed)

I wanted Captain Kirk to tell me himself.

(beat)

Well, I'll think of something else.

The girls exchange sympathetic smiles. Suddenly Uhura's LIGHTS BEGIN FLASHING. She bends to her instrument board.

ANGLE INCLUDING KIRK

UHURA

(turns to Kirk)

A distress signal's coming in, Captain.

KIRK

Put it on the scanner.

UHURA

(clicks buttons)

No image formation.

A strange voice comes out of Uhura's communication system.

PHILANA'S VOICE

Hailing, all frequencies. We're in dire need of a physician! Urgent! Physician is needed! Fatality may result. Urgent!

ANGLE INCLUDING SPOCK

SPOCK

I'm tracing.... Stellar coordinates 451
mark 2, and 319--the planet we're mapping!

KIRK

(indicating scanner)

I thought there was no life down there,
Mr. Spock.

SPOCK

(hitting sensor)

The sensor still reads negative, Captain.

KIRK

Strange...

SPOCK

We might be getting interference from
magnetic waves generated in the kironide
deposits.

(CONTINUED)

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KIRK

Then why are we picking up everything else
on the planet, including spectroscopic analysis?

SPOCK

I don't know, sir.

PHILANA'S VOICE

(in b.g.)

Hailing all frequencies. ^{IN} Need ^{of} a physician.
Acknowledge... Acknowledge...

KIRK

Mr. Spock, interference or no, that distress
message sounds authentic. Get Bones.

(to Lt. Uhura)

Acknowledge, and report we're beaming down
immediately.

cover
EXT. ACADEMY - DAY *(MATTER)* *start here* ✓

Our trio materialize in front of a complex of beautiful marble buildings,
with connecting walks, gardens, and fountains. McCoy carries a mobile
medical kit. There's no one in sight.

ANGLE - SPOCK AND KIRK

Spock and Kirk exchange glances of awe and concern.

KIRK

I can see how a few life forms might have
escaped our sensors, but not all ~~these~~ *the*
gardens and buildings.

ANGLE INCLUDING MARBLE COLUMN

ALEXANDER, dwarfed and frightened, cowers behind a marble column.
He finally finds his courage and, trembling, hurries toward the new arrivals.

ALEXANDER

Are you from the spaceship Enterprise?

Our trio exchange glances.

KIRK

(tight)

That's right...

(CONTINUED)

ALEXANDER

(quickly)

No offense.

(bows low)

Alexander at your service. I sing, I dance, I play all variety of games, and I'm a good loser, a very good loser. And I try, I try very hard. Please bear that in mind.

Our trio look at each other.

ALEXANDER

Now if you'll accompany me.

KIRK

Who inhabits this planet?

ALEXANDER

Platonians. You've never heard of us... Our home star is Sahndara. Millenia ago, just before it exploded into a nova, we got off. Our leader liked Plato's ideas... Plato - Platonius -- see. In fact, Parmen, our present philosopher-king, calls us Plato's children. Some of us think we're more like stepchildren.

(laughs, then anxious)

Now please... they're waiting for you.

Alexander suddenly wheels about and hurries OUT OF SHOT as if he were a mechanical doll. Our trio stare at one another and then stride after him.

CUT TO:

INT. PARMEN'S CHAMBER - DAY

Done in a classic Greek style. Statuary, benches, couches, and, visible in b.g., a board game with rows of geometric shapes -- balls, pyramids, cylinders, and cubes. Two tall, distinguished academicians in traditional robes, ERACLITUS and DIONYD, stand near the reclining PARMEN. His legs are covered with an afghan. Bald-headed, round-faced, and benign, his brow is beaded with perspiration and stabs of pain cross his face. His wife PHILANA, a dark, lovely woman who could pass for thirty, is bending over him with concern. She looks up, hurries forward as the dwarf COMES INTO SHOT with our trio.

ANGLE FAVORING PHILANA, MCCOY

PHILANA

Welcome to our Republic.

(anxious)

Who... Who among you is the physician?

(CONTINUED)

MCCOY

(steps forward)

I am. What's the problem?

PHILANA

(indicating Parmen on couch)

You must do something. My spouse...

McCoy goes with her. Spock and Kirk follow at a respectful distance. The academicians step aside.

ANGLE - MCCOY, PARMEN

As McCoy moves toward the patient, the AFGHAN begins to FOLD QUICKLY BACK by it self. McCoy is startled, then stares down at Parmen's swollen, infected leg, only partially visible on camera.

MCCOY

What happened to that leg!?

PARMEN

(a trifle sarcastic)

What do you suppose. I scratched it!

ANGLE INCLUDING KIRK,

McCoy throws a surprised look over at Kirk, then turns back to his patient.

MCCOY

I don't understand. Why wasn't this attended to immediately?

PARMEN

Sheer ignorance. Is there anything you can do?

MCCOY

(guarded)

We're certainly going to try. The infection is massive. Have to do a culture, blood tests, but first off let me give you a shot to ease the pain.

He reaches for his first aid kit, opens it, but before he can even touch the HYPO, an UNSEEN FORCE PULLS IT from the kit. Our trio reacts with amazement. CAMERA FOLLOWS HYPO through the air. It hovers for a moment.

ANGLE - PARMEN, MCCOY

PARMEN

Where?

MCCOY

(in awe, indicates)

Your ~~shoulder~~ arm.

The hypo CONTINUES ON toward Parmen's arm and shoots itself into his ^{upper arm} shoulder.

PARMEN

(through a flash of pain)

Sorry, didn't mean to take matters out of your hands. Can't risk any further contamination by foreign bacteria.

ANGLE - ALEXANDER, PHILANA

They're now off in a corner, watching our trio and particularly McCoy.

ALEXANDER

(to Philana)

Philana, they're such handsome people. You don't really intend to destroy them...

Suddenly the dwarf's hand is clenched into a fist and shoved into his open mouth. His teeth clamp down on his knuckles.

PHILANA

(hard, ominous)

Alexander, you talk too much.

Alexander shakes his head at her with pleading eyes.

FADE OUT.

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. PARMEN'S CHAMBER - DAY

Alexander and Eraclitus are playing on their geometrical board game. Alexander makes a move; Eraclitus's mind counters instantly as the PIECE on his side of the board MOVES ITSELF to a NEW POSITION. They turn to watch as they hear Parmen's voice o. s.

PARMEN (o. s.)
(low, speaking with difficulty)
What's your prognosis, Doctor?

ANGLE - MCCOY, PARMEN

Parmen is now perspiring profusely, breathing heavily. McCoy finishes scanning him with the medical tricorder.

MCCOY
(guardedly, as he takes
Parmen's blood)
I can't say yet. It'll be easier if I handle
my own instruments. You don't have to
worry about them; they're self-sterilizing.
Now this may hurt a little.

McCoy takes up another air instrument, goes down to Parmen's infected leg that is not directly visible on camera, sucks up infectious matter.

Parmen STIFLES A CRY AND MOANS. With a free hand, McCoy reaches for the AFGHAN to cover Parmen's legs. He is once again startled, because it hastily AVOIDS HIS GRASP and ROLLS ITSELF BACK into place. McCoy swallows, makes a specimen smear of the infectious matter on a slide, inserts slide in a long optical tube which he attaches to the tricorder, then takes the blood sample, places it in a blood differentiator cassett, which he also inserts in the medical tricorder.

REACTION SHOT

As McCoy works, CAMERA PANS TO the concerned faces of PHILANA, SPOCK, and KIRK.

ANGLE - KIRK, PARMEN, MCCOY

Parmen closes his eyes, moans again, turns over on his side.

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

I don't understand how a simple scratch could get that serious.

MCCOY

(stepping toward Kirk, low)

Neither do I. But it has. Look at his fever! And how do I knock out an infection when the tricorder doesn't have any memory banks of Platonian bacteria? All I can do, and it's going to take time, is match his bugs with a known strain and hope.

KIRK

Make sure...

Kirk breaks off as he sees a VASE COME SAILING through the air toward McCoy's head.

KIRK

McCoy, look out!

McCoy ducks. The exquisite VASE goes SMASHING into the marble wall.

ANGLE INCLUDING PHILANA, ERACLITUS, DIONYD

PHILANA

(fiercely, turning to the two Academicians)

Which one of you did that?

Eraclitus and Dionyd panic, speak almost in unison.

ERACLITUS

Not me!

DIONYD

You can't possibly believe I would...

PHILANA

Fools! You think either one of you are going to take his place?!

Philana stares at them angrily; they turn away nervously.

ANGLE - KIRK, MCCOY, PHILANA

McCoy and Kirk exchange an anxious glance.

(CONTINUED)

PHILANA

(to McCoy and Kirk)

I assure you this won't happen again.

KIRK

(to Philana, filling
the awkward silence)

This psycho-kinetic power of yours is
quite unique. How long have you possessed
it?

(CONTINUED)

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PHILANA

Two and a half millenia -- since our arrival here on Platonius..

ANGLE INCLUDING SPOCK

SPOCK

How is the power transmitted?

PHILANA

Brain waves.

SPOCK

Intriguing. How fast do they travel?

PHILANA

You'd have to ask Parmen, but I know it's approximately light speed.

SPOCK

Do these waves cease when you're asleep?

PHILANA

No, not if they're imbedded in the unconscious.

KIRK

How do dreams affect them?

PHILANA

(with a smile)

Our sleep is dreamless.

NEW ANGLE ON MCCOY

McCoy works, checking the tricorder and putting together chemicals from his mobile lab into a central vial.

MCCOY

(to Philana)

You're an advanced society. Why don't you have doctors, medicine?

ANGLE INCLUDING PHILANA

PHILANA

We haven't had any pressing need for the medical arts. You see, while still on Sahndara, we instituted a mass eugenics program. We're the result. Pared down to ^{a population of} 38, we're perfect for our utopia. Emotionality, over-concern with children and family have been eliminated. We're bred for contemplation, self-reliance, and longevity.

(beat)

How old would you say I am? Don't be afraid; I'm not vain.

(CONTINUED)

SPOCK

(unabashed)

Thirty-five.

PHILANA

That old? I...I stopped aging at thirty.
 Anyway, you missed by two thousand years.
 And Parmen's birthday was in the month of Poseiden; he was *just*
 2300. We married very young; I was only
 117.... You see, diseases are no problem, and
 ever since our psycho-kinetic power, neither
 are injuries. We scarcely have to move
 anymore, let alone work.

KIRK

That's why you have no resistance.

PHILANA

That's right, a break in the skin or a
 cut can be fatal.

(looking over at Parmen)

My spouse fell while strolling in the
 moonlight, something we seldom do.

ANGLE - MCCOY, PARMEN

McCoy working rapidly now, finishes drawing a last vial into the hypo.

MCCOY

This better do it!

KIRK'S VOICE

Duck your head!

McCoy does so as SEVERAL of the GEOMETRIC PIECES BOUNCE off his
 back. He starts for the unconscious Parmen, who is now flailing the air,
 kicking and twisting in a fever delirium. As he tries to get a grip on
 him and hold him down to administer the hypo, the geometrical BOARD
 comes FLYING THROUGH THE AIR, with MORE PIECES in its wake.

FULL SHOT - PARMEN'S CHAMBER

SPOCK

Doctor!

(CONTINUED)

McCoy again ducks. The BOARD HITS HIM in the chest. It is followed by a ~~STATUE~~, ANOTHER VASE, a CUSHION. The PIECES continue to SPIN AROUND in the air, racing hither and yon like buzzing wasps. Philana, Dionyd, and Eraclitus seem to have a zone of safety around them as the objects approach within about a yard and either zoom away in another direction or stop dead and drop to the floor. CAMERA PANS TO PICK UP KIRK, being HIT by a PILLOW, SPOCK being DRENCHED by a tumbling LITER OF WINE.

ANGLE - PHILANA, ERACLITUS

ERACLITUS

(looking about in
abject terror)

I...I...I am going insane!

PHILANA

(hysterical)

Mercy, mercy on us!

ANGLE - MCCOY, KIRK

McCoy shields the hypo with his hands, lowers his head.

MCCOY

What's happening?

KIRK

That's what I want to know.

A LIGHT FLASHES and a BEEP is heard from Kirk's belt where his communicator is. Kirk huddles over, keeps a wary eye for objects zipping by as he takes it off his belt.

ANGLE INCLUDING SPOCK

Spock, nearby, is systematically and coolly weaving his hands about to knock down the maximum number of objects as he bends to listen to Kirk on the communicator. Kirk flips the dial.

SCOTT'S VOICE

Scott to Captain Kirk, ..

KIRK

(twisting dial)

Kirk to Enterprise.

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACESHIP - DAY - STOCK

The ENTERPRISE is being TOSSED and TURNED ~~and TWISTED AROUND~~ *from side to side*
as if it were a feather in a gale.

INT. SPACESHIP - BRIDGE

As the SPACESHIP LURCHES, and ~~TWISTS and TURNS~~, our crew hangs on for dear life.

SCOTT

(over communicator)

Captain, we're in trouble!

KIRK'S VOICE

(surprised)

What do you mean?

SCOTT

(into communicator)

We're fighting a storm! No discernible cause -- I've never seen anything like it!

(reading from instruments)

It's at ten-scale turbulence right now!

As the ship gives a violent lurch, Scott turns to Sulu.

SCOTT

Emergency gyros and stabilizers at maximum!

(back into communicator)

If it keeps up this way, we can't last!

INTERCUT - INT. PARMEN'S CHAMBER

KIRK

(into communicator)

Engines at full speed, Mr. Scott. Get her out of orbit and into space!

SCOTT'S VOICE

I've tried, Captain. We're locked tight!

KIRK

(into communicator)

I think I know the answer. There's nothing you can do but batten down and weather!

SCOTT'S VOICE

Right, Captain!

ANGLE - SPOCK, KIRK, MCCOY

SPOCK

We must be experiencing the psychokinetic manifestations of Parmen's delirium.

KIRK

Exactly. Parmen's mind is not only throwing around the furniture, it's tearing apart the Enterprise. McCoy, knock him out fast!

ANGLE ON MCCOY

Ducking down, using his full field kit as a shield, McCoy takes a vial, draws it too into the hypo. Ducking a CHAIR that COMES PAST him, McCoy again tries to hold Parmen and administer the hypo. Just as he's about to do so, his hand is twisted back; his fingers are pulled open; the HYPO is SPUN AWAY and is about to be smashed to the floor. Fortunately, he stops its fall with his foot. The HYPO LANDS on the marble floor. As he reaches for it, it ROLLS AWAY from him. He hurries after it.

ANGLE - MCCOY, PHILANA

As McCoy once again bends for the HYPO, it FLIES from the floor and LANDS in PHILANA'S HAND. He slowly straightens as she studies him in anger.

PHILANA

You're planning to kill Parmen to save your ship!

MCCOY

No, Madam, I...

PHILANA

Don't lie! I heard you!

ANGLE INCLUDING KIRK

KIRK

(coming up, understanding)

Knocking someone out is our colloquialism for quieting him down.

(CONTINUED)

PHILANA

I don't believe you!

KIRK

Philana, what are you afraid of? Anyone of you can snuff us out like that!
(snaps his fingers)

MCCOY

(holds out his hand)

The hypo...

PHILANA

(hands it to him
with trepidation)

Here... Doctor... but... you must heal him, , you must! Not just because he's my spouse. Parmen's psychokinetic power is far beyond the rest of us. If he goes, we'll destroy one another to get his position.

ALEXANDER (o. s.)

Help! Save me! Please

FULL SHOT - PARMEN'S CHAMBER

They all turn in the direction of the cries.

ANGLE - ALEXANDER, KIRK

Alexander, moving from the doorway, is flattened against the marble wall. Unseen hands are punching him, hitting him. They slam him against the wall. He twists, runs, only to be raised in the air, slammed against the wall again. Kirk races over to him, intercedes, pulls Alexander down, takes the blows that are meant for the dwarf.

KIRK

Stay right behind me!

ALEXANDER

No! His mind will find me anyhow. Save yourself!

Kirk ducks, twists as an unseen blow grazes his cheek.

KIRK

Hurry up with that shot!

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE MCCOY, PARMEN

McCoy crouches low, hurries toward Parmen amid flying objects, grabs Parmen's arm, shoves the injection into his shoulder. Alexander begins to scream again.

ALEXANDER

Agh... agh... I... I can't breathe! Choking...

KIRK

McCoy, shake him! Break his concentration!

McCoy shakes Parmen. The invisible arms drop from around Alexander's neck. Then as McCoy empties the hypo, the OBJECTS in the room HOVER in mid-air, SLOWLY SETTLE to the ground.

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

(taking communicator
from his belt)

Kirk to the Enterprise...

INTERCUT - EXT. ENTERPRISE

The ship is seen settling down -- finally vibrating, oscillating slightly.

INT. ENTERPRISE - BRIDGE

Scott on the bridge, other crew members about. They are no longer hanging on for dear life. Scott hears Kirk's voice over the speaker. He hits the communicator panel.

SCOTT

Scott on the Enterprise... It's all right,
Captain; the turbulence has abated.
We're in after-shock condition.

BACK TO PARMEN'S CHAMBER

KIRK

(into communicator)

I think you'll find the orbit lock is broken,
as well. Assess damage, repair what's
necessary, and head out into space.

SCOTT'S VOICE

Aye, Captain.

ANGLE - ALEXANDER, SPOCK, KIRK, MCCOY, PHILANA

The dwarf hurries over to Kirk and Spock.

ALEXANDER

Let's go before that drug wears off.

PHILANA

(nods, turns graciously to
the visitors)

I don't know how I can ever thank you enough,
not only for myself, but for Platonius.

(beat)

(to Alexander)

Alexander, show our guests to the South Wing.

Alexander nods. Kirk and Spock turn to McCoy.

MCCOY

I better wait till the fever breaks.

Kirk and Spock nod; exit with Alexander as we

CUT TO:

INT. SOUTH WING - DAY

It is a magnificently furnished chamber, with couches, marble statuary,
etc. Off one wall are dressing rooms and sleeping quarters. Another wall,
entirely glass, is draped. Alexander is opening the drapes, revealing
lovely fountains and a terraced walk outside -- all deserted.

ANGLE - ALEXANDER, KIRK

ALEXANDER

How's that for a view? You need
anything, just say so.

KIRK

(with a friendly
smile)

Thanks, Alexander.

ALEXANDER

Think nothing of it; you people saved my life.

(beat)

I...I think I ought to tell you...that...*(swallows anxiously)*

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

What are you trying to say?

ALEXANDER

(~~swallows~~, changes his mind,
shakes his head nervously)

Nothing, nothing at all...

(smiles)

Just that you're nice people, the nicest
I ever met.

KIRK

(looking out, turning to
Alexander)

Where is everyone?

ALEXANDER

In their chambers -- meditating.

(CONTINUED)

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KIRK

Alexander, are there other Platonians like you?

ALEXANDER

(sensitive)

What do you mean, like me?

KIRK

(evenly)

Who don't have psychokinetic ability.

ALEXANDER

For a minute there I thought you were... talking about my size. They laugh at my size. But to answer your question, I'm the only one who doesn't have it. That's why I'm everybody's slave. I've got to be ten places at once; I can't ever do anything right!

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE SPOCK

SPOCK

How does one get the power?

ALEXANDER

As far as I know, it just comes to you after you're born. They say I'm a throw-back, and I am. But so are you! I'm sorry, I didn't mean anything. I shouldn't have said that.

KIRK

Don't worry about it. We're happy without it.

ALEXANDER

You know, I think you are. Where you come from, are there a lot of people without the power...and my size?

KIRK

(smiling)

Size, shape, or color doesn't matter. And nobody has the power.

ALEXANDER

(wide-eyed)

Nobody!

ANGLE FAVORING ALEXANDER

Suddenly Alexander is being pulled backwards out of the room; an unseen foot trips him. He falls hard. As he starts to get up, unseen hands pull his legs up from under him. Kirk, Spock close behind, rush over, in horror, to help him to his feet.

ALEXANDER

Nothing to worry about. I'm used to it by now.

As they hold him, he's torn out of their hands and pulled again toward the exit.

ALEXANDER

(with a sick laugh)

Somebody wants me.

(as he goes)

But I'm glad you came. Hey, it's no fun being the only anything. At least now I know there are other people in the universe, ~~nice~~ good people who are just like me...

He's yanked out of the room. Kirk and Spock exchange glances.

ANGLE - KIRK, SPOCK, GLASS WALL

Kirk studies the deserted courtyard through the glass.

KIRK

Look out there! No strolling couples...no kids playing anywhere...A whole city for thirty-eight fossils.

SPOCK

(shrugs)

It will be pleasant to leave.

KIRK

That may not be easy.

(beat)

If Parmen should die...

SPOCK

Even if he shouldn't...

KIRK

I know what you're getting at. This little "utopia" of theirs is about the best-kept secret in the galaxy. Screening them selves from our sensors, locking us in orbit, adds up to a pattern...!

There's a BUZZ at the door.

KIRK

Come in.

ANGLE - ALEXANDER AT THE DOOR

The dwarf opens the door, hanging onto McCoy's full field MEDICAL KIT. The kit is FLYING THROUGH THE AIR, almost pulling him. It leaves his hand and DEPOSITS ITSELF ON THE GROUND.

ALEXANDER

Hello again! Guess who I'm bringing.

ANGLE INCLUDING MCCOY

McCoy comes through. Alexander waves so long, closes the door behind him.

ANGLE - MCCOY, KIRK, SPOCK

Spock and Kirk both study McCoy.

KIRK

Well?

MCCOY

(pleased)

My concoction actually worked! Fever's broken and Lord, what incredible recuperative powers! The infection's already begun to drain.

KIRK

Bones, you may cure the common cold yet!

(taking out his
communicator)

If we're going to make it out of here, this is the time.

(flipping the dial)

Kirk to Enterprise...

INTERCUT - INT. SPACESHIP

KIRK'S VOICE

Scott, come in, please.

Scott on bridge, the crew looking around very concerned, frightened. Scott hits the communicator panel.

SCOTT

Scott here.

KIRK'S VOICE

Stand by to beam us up,

(CONTINUED)

SCOTT

(very concerned)

I'm afraid I can't, Captain. All our instrumentation, our phaser weapons, are frozen.

KIRK'S VOICE

The turbulence hit you that hard?

SCOTT

It's not the turbulence. Damage to the ship is minimal.

KIRK'S VOICE

What are you trying to say?

SCOTT

(awed)

I wish I knew, sir. You tell me. I'm only reporting the facts.

INTERCUT - INT. SOUTH WING FAVORING KIRK, OTHERS LISTENING

KIRK (into communicator)

We're up against a society that has psychokinetic energy more powerful than our machines. Did you get out into space?

SCOTT'S VOICE

No. The orbit lock is tighter than ever. Our long-range communication with the Star Fleet is completely severed.

KIRK

(tight, hard, into communicator)

Scotty, I'm going to find out about this. I'll get back to you.

Kirk puts the communicator back in his belt, looks at Spock and McCoy, and starts from the room as we

CUT TO:

INT. PARMEN'S CHAMBER - DAY

Parmen, sitting up in his couch, listening, as Alexander stands beside him plucking a lyre, chanting a song from Aristophanes' Frogs.

(CONTINUED)

ALEXANDER

Great Pan
 Sounds his horn;
 Marking time
 To the rhyme
 With his hoof,
 With his hoof.
 Forward, forward in our plan,
 We proceed as we began,
 (croaking like a frog)
 Brekekekex-brekekekex,
 Kooax, kooax.

As he chants, the door opens. Kirk comes striding in. Alexander ceases playing, turns, watches with concern and fear as Kirk approaches Parmen.

KIRK

Your excellency!

PARMEN

Parmen will do. Philosopher-kings have no need of titles.

KIRK

Very well. Parmen, I despise fawning, and I don't look for gratitude, but there is such a thing as common decency. The fact is, we did save your life. I'd like to know why the Enterprise's weapons and instrumentation are frozen, the ship itself locked in orbit.

PARMEN

Captain, please. You're mistaken, I assure you...

KIRK my engineer

Parmen! I just spoke to ~~him~~ ~~Scott~~ aboard the Enterprise. We showed our good faith; now you show yours. I want that ship released immediately.

Alexander shakes his head at him in fear, and in sotto voce mouths, "No, no."

PARMEN

(sitting up, tight,
 supercilious)

The amenities, Captain. Allow me to remind you I am the head of this Principality. Guests don't come barging in here, making demands and issuing orders.

Parmen stares at Kirk's PHASER weapon. It is PULLED FROM HIS BELT and ZOOMED OUT THE WINDOW. Kirk, weaponless, studies Parmen with contempt. As Kirk starts to reply, Alexander again shakes his head in fear.

KIRK

Guests! You don't know the meaning of the word. Guests' ships aren't locked in, their communications cut. They're not treated like common prisoners!

PARMEN

(furious)

Don't you take that tone with me.

Kirk fights it with all his strength, but his hand is lifted from his side, brought to his cheek, and he is forced to slap himself across the face. His other hand is brought up, and in a matter of moments he is slapping himself repeatedly across the face with one hand after the other.

.FADE OUT.

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ACT II

FADE IN:

INT. SOUTH WING - NIGHT

Composer scores appropriate mood music, perhaps suggesting flute, lyre. Kirk is morosely lying on a couch, a bandage-like strip on his face, which is visibly bruised. Spock is standing, staring out into the courtyard. McCoy is watching Kirk, who is calling over his communicator.

KIRK

Kirk to Enterprise... Acknowledge... Acknowledge...

There is no answer.

KIRK

(disturbed)

I can't raise them!

MCCOY

Leave it be, Jim. How're you doing?

KIRK

(pocketing the communicator)

Bones, I'm hurting, but it's not from the pain.

SPOCK

(turning to Kirk)

It must be psychologically disturbing to be forced to beat oneself unconscious.

KIRK

(with a bitter smile)

At the very least, Mr. Spock. I must say implications confirm what we both feared.

SPOCK

I agree.

MCCOY

(to Spock)

To what, Mr. Spock?

(CONTINUED)

~~Kirk~~
Spock

(interceding)

Parmen would never risk subjecting a Star Fleet Commander to such brutality if he had the slightest intention of releasing him or his ship.

MCCOY

But why? What's his motive?

KIRK

I don't know, but I have a feeling they want to keep this planet all to themselves.

(beat)

We're avoiding the central issue -- a course of action.

SPOCK

I've been thinking of nothing else.

McCoy suddenly stands up, starts toward the door.

KIRK

Where are you going?

MCCOY

I don't want to go, but I can't help myself!

Suddenly Kirk is yanked from his couch, and Spock is twisted around. They and McCoy are literally trotted from the room as they stare down at their legs in horror.

CUT TO:

INT. PARMEN'S CHAMBER - NIGHT

Eraclitus, Dionyd, Alexander, and Philana are seated or standing about Parmen. They applaud as our trio is trotted into the room. The Enterprise crew, particularly Kirk, is flabbergasted.

(CONTINUED)

PHILANA

(steps forward, curtsies)

Gentle spacemen, we are eternally in your debt. Please accept these trifles as tokens of our gratitude. They stem from the very source of our inspiration. To the noble Captain, the shield carried by Pericles, as a symbol of gallant leadership.

Philana motions toward the SHIELD. It FLIES INTO KIRK'S ARMS. At first he refuses to touch it; it HOVERS there. He finally takes it, inspects it, shakes his head.

PHILANA

To our silent and cerebral Mr. Spock, this kithara to pluck music to soothe his ever-active brow.

Philana motions toward the KITHARA. It SAILS OVER TO SPOCK. He takes it, doesn't even look at it, puts it under his arm.

PHILANA

And lastly, the physician who saved Platonius and my spouse, Dr. McCoy, this ancient collection of Greek cures, penned by Hippocrates himself.

Philana motions toward the SCROLL. It FLOATS OVER TO MCCOY. He stares at it in astonishment, unrolls it.

ANGLE - KIRK, PARMEN, OTHERS b. g.

KIRK

(tight, angry)

Has the Enterprise been released yet?

PARMEN

Captain, wait. I know what you're thinking. My humble apologies. You were badly used. In my own defense allow me to say that my illness was more profoundly disturbing than I myself realized. I'm sure, Captain, that you, too, have been out of sorts; and have reacted with fits of temper and rage. Unlike you, however, what I think and feel, whether for good or ill, is instantly translated into reality. Please find it in your heart to forgive me.

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

(demanding)

Parmen, has the Enterprise been released yet?

PARMEN

(with a smile)

It will be, shortly. You're free to leave the planet.

KIRK

(hard)

Good day then, and thank you for the gifts.

PARMEN

Not at all. There is one final request... After my nearly fatal infection, it has become obvious to us all that we cannot afford to be without a skilled physician.

(to McCoy)

We'd like you, Dr. McCoy, to remain.

All eyes turn toward McCoy.

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE MCCOY

MCCOY

I'm very sorry...

KIRK

(jumping in)

You're talking about my chief Medical Officer, and he's staying aboard the Enterprise.

PARMEN

(ignoring Kirk, to McCoy)

Your duties will be extraordinarily light; you'll be able to read, meditate, conduct research -- whatever you like. You will want for nothing.

MCCOY

I'm afraid the answer is no.

PARMEN

We'd like to keep it cordial, but we're determined to keep you, Doctor.

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

You can bring yourself to do this, after
Dr. McCoy saved your life...!

PARMEN

I'm losing patience, Captain.

KIRK

You ungrateful...! You call yourself
a Platonist; you dare defile the name of
Plato.

PARMEN

(becoming amused)

I don't think that he'd raise too many
objections. We've managed to live in
peace and harmony...

SPOCK

(cold)

Whose harmony? Yours? Plato
wanted beauty, and truth, and above
all, justice.

PARMEN

And so do I! Look about you. This
place is not without beauty and proportion.

KIRK

Slaves in a mausoleum.

PARMEN

(taut)

Captain, please! I admit circumstances
forced us to make a few adaptations on Plato,
but we're hardly a slave state. Quite the
contrary -- ours is the most democratic
society conceivable. Anyone can at any
moment be and do just as he wishes,
even to becoming the ruler of Platonius,
if his mind is strong enough.

KIRK

And if it isn't, he gets torn apart like
Alexander.

(CONTINUED)

PARMEN

Oh come now, we're not children. All life's a battle between desires, whether internal or external. In your ~~galaxy~~, ^{culture} justice is the will of the stronger. It's forced down people's throats by guns and fleets of spaceships. On Platonius, we'll have none of these. Our justice is the will of the stronger mind. And I for one consider it a vast improvement.

KIRK

Why?!

~~(indicating McCoy)~~
We would never use our guns for ~~this~~ ^{the} kind of brutality ~~you~~ ^{practice!}

PARMEN

(taut)

Farewell, Captain.

KIRK

Come on, Doctor.

Kirk and Spock turn to leave, start out. McCoy is frozen to the spot. Kirk looks back, sees him.

KIRK

(startled)

McCoy?

MCCOY

I...I can't move, Jim. They're... going to keep me, no matter what. Leave, please!

KIRK

(furious)

No! You're a doctor; they don't want to force you -- they need your good will. They're trying to...

PARMEN

(taut, interrupting)

Captain, go while you still can.

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

We're staying right here until Dr. McCoy is released.

PARMEN

(taut)

This is not the Enterprise, and you are not in command, Captain.

(relaxes, gets an idea, smiles)

You wish to stay? By all means. ~~Matter of fact,~~ You can help us celebrate our anniversary.

(to McCoy)

In the process, I ~~think~~ ^{hope} we can persuade the good Doctor to stay.

MCCOY

You won't persuade me.

PARMEN

I think we will.

~~DISSOLVE.~~~~FADE IN:~~

MATTIE

EXT. COURT - DAY

Lanterns, flowers decorate the area. Rows of arbors and garden seats, their inhabitants largely invisible to camera, surround a center reflecting pool and statue (of the discus thrower) or, if possible, a fountain. In the front circle of arbors, a half-dozen or so Platonians are visible, seated about in ones and twos, all wearing flowing Grecian robes -- often sporting beards; an occasional woman is among them. In the center arbor, roomier and more festively decorated than the others, sit Parmen and Philana, an unhappy McCoy between them. In another small arbor kitty-corner from them with Grecian flute, oboe, lyre, and marching drum -- a one-man band -- stands Alexander. Parmen steps forward and addresses the surrounding garden seats.

(CONTINUED)

PARMEN

Twenty-five hundred years ago a hearty band of vagabonds arrived on this barren, rough-hewn planet, determined to form a utopian brotherhood. Those were times of desperate hardship and back-breaking toil, and then a Divine Providence graced our genius and our dedication with the power of powers -- through it our every need instantly materialized. We were at last freed to become true Platonists, to devote our days to profound thought and meditation. But, fellow Academicians, this is a festive occasion. Put aside your meditations. Let the madcap revelries begin!

Parmen nods in the direction of Alexander. He strikes up a wild and lively tune. Kirk and Spock, each wearing garlands of flowers in his hair, come dancing out. Spock looks down at his moving legs in disgust.

MEDIUM CLOSE - SPOCK, KIRK

KIRK

(low)

Do I look the way you look?

SPOCK

(equally low)

We're buying time, Captain.

ANGLE - KIRK, SPOCK, ARBORS

The two men circle around in front of the fountain. The men bow in mechanical precision, do a little skip and dance as they sing in unison.

DUO

We are the space twins, flung from
the firmament to bring you merriment.

They execute a quick dance step, spin around, end up kneeling before their Platonian audience. The music stops, and from the front arbors we see and hear the Platonians shouting out.

ERACLITUS

The one with the funny ears is mine!

There's LAUGHTER.

(CONTINUED)

DIONYD

My bid 's in for the skipper himself!

There are o. s. SHOUTS of NO, NO from the other arbors.

ERACLITUS

The Captain is reserved for our ruler
and his lady.

PARMEN

(graciously)

We'll give him to you when we're done.

Parmen nods at Alexander. He begins a wild, exotic melody.

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~~ANGLE ON SCOTT~~

~~Scott crouches down, races around like a dog, his tongue hanging out, rolling his eyes, barking. There are TITTERS from the arbors.~~

~~REACTION SHOT - ALEXANDER~~

~~Alexander, watching, shaking his head in horror.~~

ANGLE ON KIRK

Kirk twines his legs and arms around and undulates like a snake, shoots his tongue out at the audience and hisses like a rattler. There is MORE LAUGHTER.

ANGLE - PARMEN'S ARBOR

MCCOY

(as he watches in
disgust)

Parmen, I find this in extremely bad taste.

PARMEN

Perhaps that's just as well.

Parmen sees something that amuses him, breaks into uproarious laughter.

ANGLE ON SPOCK

It's the laconic Spock, striding stiff-legged and impassive, his belly out. Suddenly he goes into a madman's act -- rubber-legged, his eyes fiendish and wild. His hands flail the air, he leaps about, does cartwheels, brays and foams at the mouth. The audience eats it up, roars. There are SHOUTS of MORE, MORE. The music grows wilder; Spock dissolves into insane laughter.

ANGLE ON KIRK

Kirk comes running forward.

KIRK

(shouting)

You're destroying him; you can't do this!

MORE LAUGHTER from the arbors. Kirk is thrown to the ground on all fours; he crawls about, snapping at the air; suddenly he's rolled and wallowed around on the grass like a pig, charges a flower.

REACTION SHOT - ALEXANDER

Alexander turns away, too disturbed to look any longer. *crying*

There are HOOTS and APPLAUSE from the Platonians.

ANGLE - PARMEN'S ARBOR

MCCOY

You want me to remain here, and you do this?!

PARMEN

We asked politely. Now we're using other forms of persuasion. However, to reassure you, our amusement is quite harmless. But that can change at any moment, depending on you. Think about that, Doctor.

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE KIRK

Kirk is still on his knees near the flowers, staring at Parmen and McCoy.

KIRK

(shouting)

McCoy! You're not staying, no matter what he does to us!

Suddenly his head is almost twisted off his neck, then released; his mouth is forced to snap at the flowers.

ANGLE - SPOCK, KIRK

Spock breaks into a flamenco-type dance, pirouettes around to Kirk, finishes with a flourish, one foot resting triumphantly on the four-footed Kirk's back.

SPOCK

(tears streaming from his eyes)

(He sings

the chorus

of a sad and

soul-rending song of his choice.)

Spock abruptly changes mood, and ends in a wild stamping and foot-kicking Highland Schottische. The audience really breaks out into WILD CHEERING and CATCALLS. The music stops. Spock falls to the ground, exhausted, trembling all over, clearly deeply disturbed by this violation of his person. There are SHOUTS of ENCORE, ENCORE, MORE, MORE.

REACTION SHOT - ALEXANDER

Alexander rubs his eyes with a knuckle.

ANGLE - PARMEN, MCCOY

McCoy is deeply disturbed. It's all he can do to keep from hurrying over to Spock.

MCCOY

(to Parmen)

I would never have believed a man of your intellect capable of this.

PARMEN

(unmoved)

It's really up to you, Doctor. All you need do is nod your head.

Parmen turns toward Kirk and Spock.

ANGLE - DUO

Spock and Kirk are suddenly pulled to their feet. As they get up, Kirk, his fists clenched, rushes for Parmen.

ANGLE - KIRK, PARMEN

Parmen gets up, steps toward him, stares at him and freezes him in his tracks. His foot in the air, his fists still clenched, nevertheless Kirk still shouts.

KIRK

Is this your utopia, your grand vision of the future? At least kids who poke out the eyes of stray cats don't know any better! You haven't even...

ANGLE ON KIRK

Suddenly Kirk's mouth begins to blubber meaningless gibberish.

KIRK

Ae ov la baoo see wah, etc....

ANGLE - PARMEN, KIRK

PARMEN

(angry)

We've had enough of your moralizing!

(CONTINUED)

Suddenly Kirk's arm is twisted behind his back. Unseen hands grab him under the chin, twist and jerk his neck back. He grimaces in pain.

KIRK

(screaming)

No matter what he makes me say, it's no, you hear me, McCoy, no! I...

(he's forced into gibberish again)

Bo ou et im ope...

Kirk is pulled into the air and thrown angrily to the ground.

REACTION SHOT - ALEXANDER

Alexander, trembling, outraged, hurries to the center arena, in front of the reflecting pool, waving his lyre.

ALEXANDER

Stop ~~them~~, Parmen! ~~How can you let this go on?~~ They saved your life!

There's LAUGHTER.

Suddenly Alexander is back-flipped into the pool. He comes up, soaking wet, tear-ridden. Somewhere from the gut level he delivers a final imprecation.

ALEXANDER

I'm ashamed to be a Platonian. Ashamed!

There's MORE LAUGHTER.

ANGLE - PARMEN, MCCOY

McCoy is agonized; he eyes Parmen, who is laughing along with the others, most warily.

PARMEN

(turning to McCoy)

I know you want to obey your Captain's orders, but I appeal to you as a man of character and conscience not to let this go on.

MCCOY

~~All right, but~~ I have to talk to Captain Kirk first.

(CONTINUED)

PARMEN

(with a smile of
triumph)

By all means.

ANGLE ON KIRK, SPOCK, ALEXANDER

Suddenly from the fountain Alexander is forced onto Kirk's back, and Kirk and Spock are propelled, skipping in mechanical fashion, to their chambers, amid WILDEST APPLAUSE YET.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

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ACT III

FADE IN:

INT. SOUTH WING - DAY

The dwarf, standing under an overhead radiant heater, is finishing drying his clothes. (Unlike other Platonians, he wears pantaloons and tunic.) His tunic is off, spread on a chair; he's rubbing his hair dry. He's chewing his lip, aggravated, desperate, full of shame and pent-up anger. CAMERA PANS TO SPOCK, sitting there in inner trembling, but otherwise impassive, then WIDENS TO KIRK, sitting down, still bruised, dishevelled, flexing his arm up and back, and TO MCCOY, bending over him, repairing a bad gash down the side of his face by spraying on an instant antiseptic and skin-coater. The spray virtually wipes away the gash as it hits.

MCCOY

(as he works)

I thought I was going daft. It was unbelievable even as a nightmare!

KIRK

That doesn't say much for reality.

MCCOY

(studying him, then
reluctantly)

Jim, I've thought it over. This is senseless.
I'm going to stay.

KIRK

You can't, Bones.

MCCOY

I have Parmen's word that you'll be safe.

KIRK

Don't you see it's part of a trick? He'll
let us beam up to the Enterprise and then
plunge the ship into the atmosphere.

MCCOY

(shaking head)

Why bother to trick me?

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

If he killed us outright in front of you,
you'd retaliate. A virus, poison --
you're a doctor; you have the means.

(beat)

Bones, I know you're trying to do the
right thing, but if you sacrifice yourself,
you'll just be signing our death warrant, *too!*

ANGLE ON ALEXANDER

He's stepped from the radiant heat rays and is standing near our group,
listening, staring down into McCoy's full field medical kit. Suddenly
something in him snaps. Making up his mind, he grabs up a long surgical
knife.

ANGLE INCLUDING SPOCK

SPOCK

(sees him, calls out)

Put that down!

ALEXANDER

(low, soft)

Don't be afraid. It's for them!

ANGLE - KIRK, ALEXANDER

Kirk turns abruptly.

KIRK

No, Alexander! Drop that knife!

Alexander, still brandishing the knife, backs toward the door.

ALEXANDER

It's the only way. I'm going to cut them up!
Parmen first, then anybody else I can get!
They'll become infected again, only this
time, no matter what they say, let them
die!

KIRK

(moving toward him)

Give me the knife, Alexander. It's not
your battle.

Alexander is harsh, bitter, a thousand years of wretchedness spews up
in him. As he pours out his bitterness, the knife he brandishes carves
and flails, becomes the baton for every nuance of his feeling.

(CONTINUED)

ALEXANDER

What do you mean, not my battle? If not mine... Whose! I saw what they did to you, complete strangers. I...I, so help me, for a few seconds I...I even liked it, because I got to see, I got to understand! Before I thought it was me -- my runty size, my mind that couldn't make a pebble move if I kicked it! But it's not me -- it's them, it's them! They tell me how lucky I am that they bother to keep me around! Lucky! I can't wait till it's dark. I don't want the darkness ever to go away. You don't know what it is to be afraid to see the sun go up, to wake, morning in and morning out, sure that you're lower than nothing! The arms and legs of everybody's crazy whim! For them I exist to run myself dizzy at a fingersnap. I get to kneel down and lick everybody's toes, and then grin up at them from my heart, the bottom of my heart -- smile, smile, smile! When inside I want to carve them up hunk by hunk and throw them to the fishes. Only I feel sorry for the fishes!

(stabbing the air
with his knife)

Yes! Who better than me! They don't know. They'd let me get close. I'm the only one that could. And I'm going to do it, do you hear; I'm going to do it!

Alexander backs the rest of the way toward the door, turns to one side to open it.

ANGLE INCLUDING SPOCK, KIRK

They're separated from one another; Kirk nods at Spock, he understands. Suddenly they both rush Alexander from two sides; while Spock pins one arm with a Vulcan hold, Kirk twists the knife out of Alexander's other hand.

ALEXANDER

(as they take
the knife away)

No! What are you doing? Let me at least give them a taste of what they gave me! Please! They're going to kill you anyhow, you already know that!

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

There's no point in your dying too.

ALEXANDER

(deeply moved)

That's the first time... somebody's thought of my life before their own.

(guilt-stricken)

But it's my fault -- I should have told you right off that they were out to kill you. I knew... I knew... but I was afraid!

(tears form in his eyes)

KIRK

It's all right, Alexander... You can do us and yourself more good healthy and alive.

SPOCK

(nods)

You may not be able to answer this, but at what age do Platonians attain the power?

ALEXANDER

I once asked Philana. She said three to six months after a baby starts eating solid food.

KIRK

It must be some chemical element in the food.

ANGLE INCLUDING MCCOY

MCCOY

If that were a sufficient condition, Alexander would have psycho-kinetic power equal to the others.

KIRK

Unless of course his system can't absorb the crucial element, which is why, Bones, I'd like you to take a sample of Alexander's blood.

MCCOY

Very well, Jim.

(CONTINUED)

McCoy takes out a hypo, moves toward Alexander.

ALEXANDER

It's not that I'm afraid, but will it hurt much?

McCoy reassures Alexander as he punctures the skin and withdraws blood.

MCCOY

(as he does so)
You won't know it happened.

(CONTINUED)

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The dwarf flinches and then smiles. McCoy turns to Kirk as he takes the air hypo from Alexander's arm.

KIRK

Do you still have any of Parmen's blood left over?

MCCOY

At least 3 cc.

KIRK

Good. Parmen possesses the highest order of psycho-kinetic ability, and Alexander the lowest under the same environmental conditions.

SPOCK

Yes, of course. It makes it highly probable that Alexander was born with some bio-chemical deficiency relative to Platonius.

MCCOY

It makes him most valuable. The obvious step is for me to put their blood samples through a full comparative test in the tricorder. The comparison should tell us what we're after.

McCoy steps to the full field medical kit, takes the tricorder, some cassetts, inserts specimens, hits various buttons on the tricorder. CAMERA PANS AROUND THE ROOM, PICKS UP SPOCK, KIRK watching McCoy work.

CLOSE ON MCCOY

There's a BUZZ, a ~~LIGHT BLINKS ON AND OFF~~ on the tricorder. McCoy reads out the information on several of the tricorder's data windows.

MCCOY

The one significant difference between Parmen's blood and Alexander's is the concentration of kironide, broken down by pituitary enyzmes.

ANGLE INCLUDING KIRK

KIRK

Kironide's a high-energy source. It could be it.

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE SPOCK

SPOCK

The pituitary enyzmes confirm the hypothesis.
(looking toward Alexander)
They also regulate body growth.

ANGLE, INCLUDING ALEXANDER

ALEXANDER

You mean the same thing that kept me from
having the power made me a dwarf?

Spock nods.

KIRK

Now I understand why Parmen's keeping
his utopia such a secret. Anybody coming
down here and staying long enough would
get the power too.

SPOCK

Unfortunately, we don't have from three
to six months.

KIRK

Exactly, Mr. Spock.
(to McCoy)

Isn't there some quick way to build up
the same concentration of kironide in us?

MCCOY

It'll take doing, but it should be possible
to take pituitary extract and break down
kironide in the medical tricorder.

KIRK

What're ^{we} ~~you~~ waiting for?!

ANGLE ON MCCOY

McCoy gets busy, pulls vials from the medical kit, inserts them in the
tricorder, checks windows, inserts an optical tube, more vials.

SHOT - NURSE CHAPEL, LT. UHURA, YEOMAN LENNOX, SCOTT

As McCoy works, the girls are beamed down and suddenly appear in the
room, followed by an amazed Scott.

NO! They should enter!

REACTION SHOT - MCCOY, SPOCK, KIRK

The three men look at each other.

ANGLE - GIRLS, SCOTT, KIRK

LT. UHURA

Captain Kirk, am I glad to see you!

SCOTT

(shaking his head)

Jim, you won't believe it, but this is not my doing... My hands were forced...

YEOMAN LENNOX

(panicked, looking around frantically)

Where are we? What... What's happening to us?!

KIRK

It'll be all right, Helen.

NURSE CHAPEL

I thought I was sleepwalking! I couldn't stop going to the transporter room! What's this all about?

KIRK

I'm not sure, ~~but whatever it is,~~ ^{let's} I hope we won't have to put up with it for long.

Suddenly a TRAY with bath oils, hair sprays COMES INTO SHOT, magic carpeting through the air.

REACTION SHOT - GROUP

They stare at the items and each other.

ANGLE ON SCOTT

SCOTT

(bug-eyed)

Aye, I'm not a drinking man...

ANGLE - MINI-ROBES

Three lovely, sheer MINI-ROBES on hangers move past the group, as if held by unseen hands. CAMERA FOLLOWS ROBES as they disappear into open door of a dressing room.

ANGLE ON SCOTT

SCOTT

(continuing, amazed)
and I'm not dead, at least I
 think I'm not...

ANGLE ON GIRLS

The Yeoman suddenly stands up. The other girls follow suit.

YEOMAN LENNOX

(panicked)
 It's happening again!

ANGLE - INCLUDING SPOCK, MCCOY, KIRK, SCOTT

McCoy stops working, stares at them, as do the others. The girls march toward the room that the robes disappeared into.

KIRK

(as the girls
 move past him)
 Helen? Nurse? Lieutenant?

It's obvious the girls are being manipulated from afar; their mouths are clamped; they do not turn at his call. They march -- mechanical wooden dolls -- disappear into the room. The door closes.

REACTION SHOT - GROUP

Kirk, worried, looks over at this subordinate officers.

ANGLE - MCCOY, KIRK

MCCOY

(frightened)
 What do you make of it?

~~ANGLE INCLUDING SCOTT~~~~SCOTT~~

~~(to McCoy)
 You mean to say, you don't know either!~~

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

(~~shakes head; then~~
(to McCoy, worried but
driving)

Worrying won't help, Bones, but the
kironide might.

McCoy, nodding, understanding, finishes putting a vial in the tricorder,
works dials.

ANGLE ON KIRK

Kirk paces up and down, stares at the dressing room door.

*Why doesn't Kirk
follow them?*

KIRK

If anything happens to those girls, I'll
never forgive myself.

MCCOY

(over shot)

I've broken down the kironide for you.

Kirk turns in the direction of McCoy's voice. CAMERA WIDENS TO
INCLUDE MCCOY IN SHOT, holding air hypo full of fluid.

KIRK

Think carefully. Could your brew have
any possible toxic effect?

MCCOY

None that I know of.

KIRK

Then let's not waste time.

(indicating)

Massive injections for the four of us.
Aim for at least double the concentration
found in Parmen's blood. Let's hope
it takes.

McCoy steps to Kirk, shoots the kironide into his veins.

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE SPOCK

KIRK

Even if this works, I'm afraid it won't
do us any good.

SPOCK

Why not, Captain?

(CONTINUED)

McCoy, having finished with Kirk, injects the impassive Spock.

KIRK

Think about it. If we hit the jackpot and all four of us come up with the psycho-kinetic power, what chance do we have against thirty-eight of them?

SPOCK

Your point's well taken. However, the psycho-kinetic power isn't additive. If it were, with the Platonians' hostile propensities, two or three of them would have combined psycho-kinetic forces centuries ago and deposed Parmen.

ANGLE INCLUDING ALEXANDER

ALEXANDER

He's right. Parmen says everyone has his own separate power frequency, because whenever they try to put their power together and use it, it never works.

As McCoy turns to inject Scott, he suddenly finds himself being pulled from the room.

MCCOY

(as he's forced to
stride from the room)

It's Parmen. I'm overdue!

(holding out hypo)

Mr. Spock, take over. 2.3 cc per dose.

Spock takes hypo as McCoy, striding even faster, exits.

ANGLE - SPOCK, SCOTT, KIRK

Spock immediately turns, shoots the broken-down kironide into Scott's veins.

SCOTT

(as Spock does so)

I suppose this is...necessary, but I can't say I like it.

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

Just pray it works, Scotty.

SPOCK

The time vector concerns me. It may take days or weeks before there's enough psycho-kinetic buildup from the kironide to do us any good.

KIRK

What about Alexander?

SPOCK

Well, since the selenide's already broken down and injected directly into his bloodstream, it should work on him as well as the rest of us. Better, in fact -- he's acclimated.

(turns toward Alexander
with the air hypo)

ANGLE FAVORING ALEXANDER

ALEXANDER

(steps back)

After what I've been through -- no, never!

KIRK

(surprised)

Why not? You could conceivably take Parmen's place and run the whole planet.

ALEXANDER

(flailing the air,
tears in his eyes)

You think that's what I want -- to turn into my own enemy!? To be one of them? To just lie there and have things fly in at me -- a big blob of nothing! I want to laugh and cry and care! I want to run with my feet and pick up things with my hands! You're welcome to the power! And if you make it out of here, all I ask is that you take me with you. Just drop me anyplace where they never heard of kironide or Platonius!

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

All right, Alexander. All right!

Suddenly a door is HEARD opening o. s. The men turn. Our three lovely girls COME INTO SHOT, magnificently groomed, dressed in exquisite mini-robos. The men stare at them in Kafkaesque fear. Yeoman Lennox breaks the silence and says it for all of them.

YEOMAN LENNOX

I've never felt so beautiful and so miserable
in my whole life.

KIRK

(bitter, disturbed)

The afternoon entertainment wasn't
enough for them.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

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ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. SOUTH WING - NIGHT

The remains of a sumptuous dinner are set on a low table, with glittering crystal and silver, lit by the quiet glow of candles. Our spacecrew six lie about on low couches, having their dessert, ^{white, sugary, egg-shaped cookies.} The men are now on a par with our beautifully clad girls. They are dressed in fine Grecian robes, their hair done in the style of the period.

CHAPEL

(trying hard to be
gay)

Whatever else these Platonians are,
they have a good chef!

(taking a cookie)

These courabies, o la la!

Yeoman Lennox puts down her fork with a clatter.

UHURA

Christine, please.

Nurse Chapel looks over at Yeoman Lennox, defending herself.

CHAPEL

Do you think it's better to sit here and
grow beards? Maybe being a nurse makes
me more thick-skinned. I still say it's
eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow
you...

YEOMAN LENNOX

(disturbed, interrupting)

That's just the way it feels, like the last
meal of the condemned.

KIRK

(pointedly, with effort)

Don't Helen. I ^{agree} with Nurse Chapel.

(taking up a ^{one} hunk
with his fork)

~~The melon~~ is delicious.

Kirk turns to Spock, who is eating ^{grapes} impassively.

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

(grave)

Have you experienced any symptoms from the shot?

SPOCK

A slight flush.

KIRK

So did I.

SCOTT

Here too, but it may have been the wine.

SPOCK

I don't believe so. Let's attempt a simple test.

(indicates grapes in bowl)

Let's all concentrate on raising that cluster of grapes.

They all peer at it; the girls watch in strained silence.

CLOSE ON GRAPES

The grapes, unmoved, nestle placidly between two apples.

ANGLE ON CREW

Kirk, disappointed, looks over at Spock and Scott.

KIRK

Didn't budge.

He reaches for the ^{liter of wine}~~coffee pot~~, turning to Yeoman Lennox beside him.

KIRK

More wine, Helen?

YEOMAN LENNOX

(still depressed)

Please.

(CONTINUED)

As Kirk starts to lift the urn to pour, suddenly the TABLE BEGINS TO MOVE OUT from between them. He hastily levels the urn as the TABLE with all its dishes is ROLLED OUT of the room. Our space crew, lying on their various couches, are shifted about and brought into the center of the room. Spock, rigid, tight-lipped, is placed near the dewy-eyed, interested Nurse Chapel. A few yards away, on two other couches, a frozen Scott and an equally frozen Lt. Uhura. And near them, completing the semi-circle, a frightened Yeoman Lennox and a concerned Captain Kirk.

FULL SHOT - INT. SOUTH WING

FANFARE is HEARD; the WALLS LIGHT UP, revealing their transparency in a scrim effect. At various points behind the scrim in checkerboard fashion are dark boxes with panels which ^{new slide 9200} There is a WHITE TRANSLUCENT EFFECT in the scrim area between boxes. The boxes themselves are dark within, but we catch OCCASIONAL GLIMPSES OF PLATONIANS, particularly in those boxes CLOSEST TO CAMERA. CAMERA PANS TO ALEXANDER, in one of them. He's in semi-darkness, sitting before a music stand, performing. In the ILLUMINATED, large center box, almost at floor level, sit Parmen and Philana, with McCoy between them. Parmen stands, raises his hand; his low-pitched voice reverberates through the room.

CLOSE ON PARMEN

PARMEN

Fellow Academicians, welcome to our evening convocation. You all know the rules. A word of advice -- please relax -- we have many hours of pleasure before us. ~~Therefore, we urge self-restraint. And above all, let us remember the other fellow, and await our turn.~~ And now without further ado, on to our night of frolic!
(motions to Alexander)

ANGLE ON ALEXANDER

He begins to play softly, melodiously.

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

(glaring)

Parmen, what do you think you're doing!

ANGLE ON PARMEN

PARMEN

Silence! You're destroying the mood! And don't let me warn you again!

ANGLE - KIRK, YEOMAN LENNOX

Suddenly Kirk is forced to rise and move over beside Helen, who is sitting up on her couch. He fights it every step of the way, glares up at Parmen, who jerks Kirk's head away. Slowly he is forced to lift his arms and reach for Yeoman Lennox. She is very frightened.

YEOMAN LENNOX

(low)
I wish I wasn't so...panicked! It's ^{just the way} ~~what~~ they
want, ~~isn't it?~~ ^{me to react, isn't it?}

KIRK

(also low)
Helen, they don't matter! They don't
matter at all!

ERACLITUS

(calling o. s.)
Louder! We can't hear!

KIRK

You piranhas! You'd kill your own
young.

TEETH CLICK as Kirk's jaw slams shut. He's forced to take Helen into his arms, bend, and kiss her. She closes her eyes and is forced to move in close to him. As they kiss tenderly, the MUSIC GROWS SOFTER AND FADES OUT. CAMERA PANS OVER TO SCOTT and LT UHURA. Lt. Uhura lies against Scott's chest, strumming her guitar, while Scott scratches her back, looking very bitter and uncomfortable. TITTERS from the audience. CAMERA PANS OVER TO SPOCK AND CHAPEL. Their shoes are off, and their couches are moved close together lengthwise, so that the length is doubled. Their toes are extended over the small gap between the couches, and they are playing toesies. While they do so, they are forced to sit up. Spock, slapping the palms of Nurse Chapel's hands, plays patty-cake with her, while she giggles uncontrollably.

SPOCK

Patty-cake, patty-cake, baker's man,
Bake me a cake as fast as you can.
Roll it, and pat it, and mark it with a "C",
And put it in the oven for Nursey and me.

CHEERING, LAUGHTER, CAT CALLS from the crowd.

REACTION SHOT - ALEXANDER

Alexander, disturbed, listens to the jeering with horror.

ANGLE - PARMEN'S BOX

MCCOY

(turns to Parmen)

Parmen, you can't allow...

PARMEN

Enough, Doctor! You won't be heard until you agree to become one of us.

ANGLE - SPOCK, NURSE CHAPEL

They're now engaged in another nursery rhyme, with hands criss-crossing.

SPOCK, CHAPEL

Pease porridge hot, pease porridge cold,

Suddenly Spock is forced to miss Nurse Chapel's hands and fall forward between the couches. As he gets up, he's forced to sit down beside her on the couch. He strains, but he's forced to put his arms around Christine. He looks up in panic at Parmen's box.

SPOCK

Parmen! You must not do this! I am a Vulcan! And Vulcans cannot display their affection in public. This is against my very being!

DIONYD

(o. s.)

Did you hear that? His very being! Marvelous!

Tears come to Nurse Chapel's eyes.

CHAPEL

I'm sorry it has to be this way, Mr. Spock.

Mechanically, almost a jerking, erector set rhythm, he brings her to him; her lips are jerked up at him. He trembles, begins to perspire.

(CONTINUED)

SPOCK

Please, no -- I ask you again...

Suddenly his mouth is forced closed, and he bends to kiss Nurse Chapel. MORE APPLAUSE. However, before he ever does, his head is pulled away, and his jerking erector set rhythm to bring her to him begins all over again.

ANGLE ON ALEXANDER

Alexander looks over at the rapt faces of other Platonians, makes up his mind. He sits down on the edge of the box, lets himself down to the floor in the semi-darkened room, still lit only by candles, and slips away. CAMERA PANS OVER TO KIRK AND YEOMAN LENNOX. As they are parted, Kirk feels deep compassion for the girl. It's obvious she likes him very much; and under the present circumstances, it's embarrassing and horrible.

KIRK

I...Helen, I do understand.

YEOMAN LENNOX

(on the verge of
tears)

Captain... I...I so wanted to be
close to you. And now all I want to do is
crawl away someplace and die!
(begins to cry, burying
her face in his chest)

KIRK

Don't....

Suddenly they're yanked apart and twisted around like two robots. CAMERA FOLLOWS YEOMAN LENNOX, now forced to skip over to Scott and pull on his ear, while Lt. Uhura hops toward Kirk. CAMERA PANS OVER TO SPOCK AND NURSE CHAPEL. He is on his knees now, again almost kissing her, and again his head is jerked back.

CHAPEL

Forgive me. I...I don't want to do this!
I don't!

She reaches her hand down and begins tousling his hair. He shakes helplessly in anger. There are TITTERS from the crowd.

ANGLE - PARMEN'S BOX
McCoy sits with fists clenched.

57.

PARMEN

Well, Doctor?

MCCOY

No!

ANGLE ON ALEXANDER

In the shadows, he bends down to the medical kit, finds the surgical knife.

ANGLE INCLUDING KIRK AND LT. UHURA

She hops over and falls into Kirk's lap. In a burst of anger, he picks her up, puts her on her feet, turns toward Parmen's box, shakes his fist at him.

KIRK

Parmen! You know what you and your Academicians are...

Suddenly Kirk is frozen into position; his mouth moves violently; but no sound comes out.

ANGLE - ERACLITUS IN BOX

ERACLITUS

Parmen, please... Unfreeze his vocal cords! It'll provide excellent discussion material. And I do love to see him froth at the mouth!

ANGLE - PARMEN'S BOX

PARMEN

(reluctantly)

Very well, if there are no objections.

Parmen waits a moment, turns his eyes toward Kirk.

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

(his moving mouth
finds sound)

You're dead, all of you! You died centuries ago! We may disappear tomorrow, but at least we're living now, and you can't stand that! You're half-crazy because you're got nothing inside! Nothing! You have to twist and pull and poke; you have to mock our deepest feelings, to convince yourselves you're superior! But all you are is vicious and ~~indescribably~~ vulgar to boot!

ANGLE ON ALEXANDER

He's creeping along in the shadows, holding the surgical knife. As Kirk finishes, Alexander makes a dash for Parmen's box, the knife poised to strike.

ANGLE - PHILANA

PHILANA

Parmen, beware!

ANGLE ON PARMEN

Parmen's eyes spin around; he stares at Alexander, stops him cold.

PARMEN

(standing up angrily)

Alexander again! He likes to play with knives. Very good, we'll indulge him.

As Alexander strains every nerve fiber, Parmen, slowly, relentlessly forces the surgical blade down toward Alexander's own chest.

REACTION SHOT - GROUP

Everyone watches in horror.

SHOT - KIRK

His eyes are fixed on Parmen, and Alexander. He's concentrating every muscle.

ANGLE - ALEXANDER, PARMEN

The knife stops short. Then, all at once, two unseen fists slam Parmen in the stomach and face. He falls against the back of the box.

PARMEN

(shaken, crying out)

Who... Who... Who did that?

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

(pleased, proud)

I did.

(CONTINUED)

ERACLITUS

(o. s.)
Impossible!

DIONYD

(o. s.)
What is it?

Philana
~~PLATONIUM #1~~

(o. s.)
What's going on?

ANGLE ON PARMEN

PARMEN
(recovering, stepping
forward)

You found a way to get the power. But it's
not enough.

ANGLE - BOX HIGH UP ON WALL

Suddenly a CHAIR comes SPINNING DOWN, moving directly toward Kirk.

ANGLE - SPOCK, KIRK

Spock is now on his feet, taking in the scene. He sees the chair coming down.

SPOCK

Captain!

However, as Spock stares at the CHAIR, it FREEZES in MID-AIR, HOVERS
above Kirk's head. Spock's mind pushes it to one side, lets it fall
harmlessly to the ground.

SPOCK

(loudly and clearly)
I have the power too.

ANGLE INCLUDING SCOTT

SCOTT

So do I!

KIRK

(calling out)
Platonians, hear this! The next one
of you who tries anything will get hurt!
Not only do we possess your psychokinetic
ability, but at twice your power level!

ANGLE ON PARMEN

PARMEN

(hard, cold)

Not twice mine!

FULL SHOT - SOUTH WING

Suddenly the dwarf is spun around, his knife pulled up in the air. He races for Kirk. Kirk turns, concentrates on him, slows him, almost stops him in what amounts to a psychic Indian wrestling match. The dwarf now inches only slowly to Kirk. With all his effort, Kirk wheels him around and now Alexander begins slowly striding toward Parmen.

REACTION SHOT - GROUP

All eyes stare at the dwarf and Parmen.

ANGLE - PARMEN, ALEXANDER

The dwarf is picking up speed now.

CLOSE ON PARMEN

Parmen's eyes are now bulging out in concentration.

ANGLE - PARMEN, ALEXANDER

With all his effort, Parmen slows Alexander, but the dwarf is still coming. He lifts the surgical knife higher as he approaches the box, and then, inch by inch, he's about to plunge it into Parmen.

PARMEN

Captain, no! I beg of you. I'll do anything you say. I do not wish to die. Do you hear me, Captain!

Alexander's motion is frozen. He is now fighting hard to himself plunge the knife into Parmen.

ALEXANDER

(to Kirk)

Let me do it! Let me finish him!

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

No, it's unnecessary.

ANGLE ON ALEXANDER

Alexander's fingers are pried loose from the KNIFE. CAMERA FOLLOWS IT as it SPINS TOWARD KIRK; he grabs it and puts it in his belt.

ANGLE ON PARMEN

As everyone watches, Parmen, now himself the automaton, steps from his box into the room, and while he fights it, is slowly forced to kneel before the dwarf.

ALEXANDER

(looks down with contempt)

Listen to me, Parmen! Listen good. I could have had a shot the same as them, and gotten the power, but I didn't want it. I could've run this place; I could of been you, right here and now! But the sight of you and your Academicians sickens me! I'm turning against my own birth, do you understand! Because with all your brains, you're slimier and dirtier than anything that ever walked or crawled in the whole universe!

ANGLE ON KIRK

He's talking over the communicator.

KIRK

I'm glad you're reading me loud and clear, Sulu. There won't be any further trouble. Stand by to beam us up. We're bringing a guest aboard. He'll be with me. We'll drop him at a Star Station.

SULU'S VOICE

Yes sir, awaiting your orders.

ANGLE INCLUDING KIRK

As Kirk turns away, the leader of the Platonians gets up, approaches him.

PARMEN

Captain, you knew I was going to burn up the Enterprise. Yet you spared me.

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

(looks him over
a moment)

To us, killing is murder, even for revenge. But I'm notifying you officially, other Star ships will be visiting Platonius and soon..!

PARMEN

(hastily)

There's no need for concern. They'll be safe. Of late I have begun to feel that we've become bizarre and unproductive. We're existing just to nurse our power. It's time for some fresh air. We'll welcome your inter-stellar visits.

KIRK

I don't believe you. The minute we leave, you'll lose your fear, and turn as arrogant and sadistic as ever. So let me warn you for your own good, this incident in its entirety will be reported to the Star Fleet Command. Keep your power; we don't want it, but if needs be, we can create it in a matter of hours. Don't try anything again, or the ~~next Star Fleet~~ Federation ~~Commander~~ will order your utopia blown off the face of the universe.

PARMEN

(nodding)

Understood, Captain.

(beat)

And you're right; none of us can be trusted. Uncontrolled, power turns even saints into savages. We can all be counted on to live down to our lowest impulses.

KIRK

You're good at making speeches, Parmen. I hope this one sinks in. Stand back.

Parmen moves off.

KIRK

Alexander...

Alexander hurries over. Kirk takes up communicator.

(CONTINUED)

KIRK

(into communicator)

Kirk to ~~Mr.~~ Sulu. I'm bringing a guest aboard. We're dropping him at the first Star Base. Beam us up.

The trio and Alexander shimmer and de-materialize.

CUT TO:

Orbit shot
INT. ENTERPRISE BRIDGE - DAY

Our spaceship crew, including Alexander, on the bridge. There are smiles, handshakes, clasps all around.

SULU

Welcome back, Captain.

KIRK

(all business, to Sulu)

Good to be here. Bring her about, proceed to new orbital path, bearing 243, mark six. Complete mapping sweeps.

SPOCK

(o. s.)

Captain, I protest this highly irregular conduct.

ANGLE WIDENS TO INCLUDE SPOCK, CHAPEL, SCOTT

The nurse bends over, finally does it, kisses Spock full on the lips, straightens.

KIRK

What's going on, Nurse?

CHAPEL

(innocently)

I don't know. Something or somebody just up and forced me to kiss Mr. Spock!
(winks quickly at Scott)

KIRK
~~SCOTT~~

(grins)

As captain's
I accept full responsibility, ~~Captain~~.
Forgive me, Mr. Spock. The psycho-kinetic power hasn't left me yet, and for a moment it just went to my head.
(winks back at Chapel)
Never happen again.

FADE OUT.