

Kirk  
Spock  
Scott  
Sulu  
McCoy

Enterprise  
M'Kenna



STAR TREK

"BEM"

A Script by David Gerrold

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FIRST DRAFT

FADEIN:

*Exit Spock* - ENTERPRISE CRUISING -- APPROACHING PLANET

KIRK, O.S.

Captain's log, stardate 7403.6. As part of Starfleet's goal to seek out new life, the Enterprise is on a series of exploratory and contact missions. Traveling with us, as an independent observer, is a member of a newly contacted alien species. (Honorary) Commander Ari bn Bem is from the planet Pandro in the Garo-7 system.

*Exit Spock* - ENTERPRISE IN ORBIT

KIRK, O.S. (CONT'D)

We have taken up orbit around Delta Theta 3, a newly discovered Class-M planet. Nameless, it has been touched by only one previous scouting mission. The team reported evidence of large aboriginal life, but disappeared shortly thereafter. Our mission is to investigate the alleged aborigines and the possibility that they are intelligent.

DISSOLVE TO:

INTERIOR -- BRIEFING ROOM.

Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Scotty, Sulu (?) -- plus a three man contact team.

KIRK

(to team)

Sensors report ~~that~~ the aborigines are quite ~~large~~. They may be dangerous -- as evidenced by the disappearance of the last contact team, ~~so I want you to be especially careful~~. Don't take unnecessary risks. But I want those monitoring devices planted. Understand? Mr. Spock will be tracking you throughout, if you have any trouble -- of any kind -- don't try to be a hero. Beam up.

RC  
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*location of groups*

Aye, sir.

ENSIGN

~~All right. Have the transporter room stand by.~~  
~~(rises)~~

~~KIRK~~

DISSOLVE TO:

~~INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM~~

~~Kirk, Spock, Scotty, the contact team, etc., enter the transporter room -- and stop, startled.~~

~~ANGLE ON CONSOLE -- Large blue hairy creature standing at console working controls. Ari bn Bem.~~

~~BEM~~  
~~(turning to Kirk)~~  
~~Ahh, Kirk Captain. Settings are almost complete.~~

~~KIRK~~

~~KIRK~~  
~~Commander Bem, what are you doing in the transporter room?~~

~~ANGLE ON ALL~~

~~BEM~~  
~~Have decided to accompany contact team for observation of same.~~

~~KIRK~~  
~~(annoyed)~~  
~~Commander Bem -- you were assigned to this ship as an independent observer, yet you have spent the past six missions secured in your quarters. You've done no observing at all -- until now when we're dealing with an extremely dangerous planet.~~

~~BEM~~  
~~(makes a chirping sound of annoyance)~~  
~~(to himself, first)~~

~~Patience...~~

~~(to Kirk)~~  
~~Have decided that nexus is now. Must observe workings of starship and crew.~~

KIRK

This mission is not for casual observers. It could be hazardous.

BEM

Am prepared.  
(he makes a last setting on the console)

ANGLE ON KIRK AND SPOCK

KIRK

(to Spock)

Mr. Spock, I don't like this. At all.

SPOCK

Captain, Starfleet is rather concerned about diplomatic relations with the Pandronians. They advised that Commander Bem be given anything he requested.

KIRK

KIRK

(addending)

Within reason, ~~of course.~~

SPOCK

~~Of course.~~

KIRK

I don't think this is reasonable.

SPOCK

Starfleet might feel otherwise, sir.

MEDIUM ANGLE

KIRK

(turning back to Bem)

Commander Bem -- this is not a...joyride,  
a --

(searching for the right word)

-- pleasure excursion. I cannot let you beam down to the planet without adequate protection. I'm sure you understand the diplomatic consequences if anything were to happen to you.

BEM

Understanding is, Kirk Captain, but this one must remain adamant. Am prepared to accompany.

SPOCK

(pointing out)

Captain, the contact team is quite competent....

FAVORING KIRK

KIRK

I know -- but I'd feel better if I accompanied them myself.

(turning to ensign)

Give me your equipment belt.

FAVORING SPOCK

SPOCK

(taking belt from second ensign)

I had better go with you, sir.

FAVORING KIRK

KIRK

(nods)

Then we won't need the contact team, will we? Mr. Spock and I will plant the monitoring devices. ~~instead of the regular crew.~~ You men are dismissed.

Contact team exits.

Ensign  
yes sir.

ANGLE ON SCOTTY

SCOTTY

You just can't resist going down there yourself, can you, sir?

KIRK

KIRK

Mr. Scott -- I have never sent any of my men anywhere I was not willing to go myself -- and besides, I can't risk anything happening to our observer. Are you ready for beam-down?

TRANSPORTER CONSOLE -- SCOTTY TAKING UP HIS POSITION

Bem leans quickly into shot.

BEM

I have already set controls for same.

SCOTTY

(checking)

Everything appears to be all right, *SIR*,  
*COORDINATES ARE LOCKED ON.*

TRANSPORTER CHAMBER

Kirk, Spock, Bem take their positions on the platform.

KIRK

Energize...

TRANSPORTER EFFECT

The sets dissolve around them. Let's take advantage of animation to follow a process that we could never have followed live. This time, it is everything but our stars that dissolves. Give the viewer a feeling of what it is like to beam down. The transporter room fades out and is replaced by:

*EXT*, SURFACE OF THE PLANET -DAY

A swampy area, lakes, rivers, cypress-like trees, creepers, vines, open-sky, wide spaces -- a rain-forest, but with a slightly desolate feeling. There are meadowed spaces, but they are very muddy. Sounds of birds, monkeys, and other assorted fauna in the woods.

The three space-visitors materialize above the surface of a lake, close to shore. In fact, Bem is right above the edge of it. As they finish beaming in, Bem automatically extends his legs to allow for the distance between himself and the ground -- several feet -- but Kirk and Spock, not having extensible legs, go SPLASH! into the water.

CLOSER ANGLE

Bem rushes to help Kirk and Spock to their feet.

BEM

So sorry -- must have made miscalculation, Kirk Captain.

CLOSEST ANGLE -- ON BEM'S HANDS

As he deftly relieves Kirk and Spock of their phasers and communicators.

ANGLE

The three of them climbing onto the shore.

BEM

(he has stuffed their phasers and communicators into his sample pouch.)

Must now begin study of aborigines....

Bem turns and disappears into the forest.

KIRK AND SPOCK

Exchange a glance.

KIRK

What the -- ?

Almost automatically, he reaches for his communicator --

KIRK

Mr. Spock, my communicator's gone.

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK

Mine too, Captain. Our phasers as well.

KIRK

KIRK

Maybe they came off when we fell --  
(He looks to the lake, starts to move toward it...)

DISSOLVE TO:

*LMT. LAKE - DAY*

KIRK AND SPOCK KNEE-DEEP IN THE LAKE, QUITE WET

They straighten up and begin walking out of the water.

SPOCK

The most logical assumption, Captain, is that Commander Bem took them from us when he helped us out of the water the first time.

KIRK

It seems that he wants us marooned....

FADEOUT

*DIS SOLVE*

FADEIN:

EXTERIOR PLANET -- TREES AND BRANCHES

Kirk and Spock are moving along through the trees -- the branches form fairly wide avenues.

CLOSER ANGLE

KIRK

I can't understand why he would take our communicators and our phasers -- I mean, why does he want to maroon us here? What purpose does it serve?

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK

Meaningless, Captain. Commander Bem is a Pandronian, and as such, is an unknown quantity. Whatever his motives may be, I am sure that -- to him, at least -- they are good ones.

MED ANGLE

KIRK

(sighing in momentary defeat...)

Mm. Who can understand the motives of an alien?

Spock gives him a peculiar look.

SPOCK

Indeed.

WIDER ANGLE -- SILHOUETTES AGAINST BRIGHTNESS. TWO SMALL SHAPES ON A GIANT ARCHING BRANCH.

SPOCK

(pointing)

I believe he went that way, Captain...

(pauses)

On the other hand...

(trails off)

*Should  
be there*

*Est. They are  
following Bem.  
How do they know  
he went this way?  
etc.?*

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KIRK  
I think we've lost him.

CLOSER ANGLE

Kirk sits down, tiredly.

KIRK (CONT'D)  
I guess the best thing to do is wait until  
Scotty gets worried and starts a sensor scan  
for us.

CAMERA PULLS BACK SLOWLY --

Revealing that Bem is watching them from quite close by. He is scanning  
them with some kind of alien tricorder...

DISSOLVE TO:

*Ext. Space -* ENTERPRISE IN ORBIT, S L O W L Y MOVING ACROSS SCREEN

DISSOLVE TO:

*Int.* BRIDGE -- ANGLE ON SECOND DOOR

Scotty enters through it. Looks to Sulu.

SCOTTY  
Has the Captain checked in yet, Mr. Sulu?

ANGLE ON SULU

SULU  
No, sir. He hasn't.

MED ANGLE, BOTH. ESTABLISHING SHOT

SCOTTY  
Aye, that's peculiar. It's twenty minutes  
past time.

(turning to M'ress)  
Lt. M'ress, try to raise them.

ANGLE ON M'RESS

M'RESS  
I've been trying for ten minutes, Mr. Scott.  
They don't answer!

*Take out ten min. req. or - don't raise them*

ANGLE ON SCOTTY AND SULU

SCOTTY  
(puzzled, worried -- but waves it off...)  
It's probably nothing to worry about.  
The Captain can take care of himself.

ANGLE ON SULU

SULU  
(knowingly)  
I'll start a routine sensor scan, sir.

ANGLE

SCOTTY  
(Why, Mr. Sulu must be telepathic!)  
That's a good idea, Mr. Sulu. It's probably not necessary....but it saves me the trouble of asking you to do it.

SULU  
It'll take a while to set it up, sir. I'll bet you ten quatloos the Captain checks in before I'm finished.

SCOTTY  
You're on.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR -- SURFACE OF THE PLANET

Bem is moving through the branches of the trees. If he has to go near the ground, it is shown to be muddy, and often underwater.

He pauses, scans the area with his tricorder-device...

BEM  
Ahhhh. Nexus occurs. Action is. Complexity completes. Delightfully.

CAMERA MOVES SIDeways AND ZOOMS IN ON WHAT HE HAS BEEN LOOKING AT --

A party of aborigines. They are almost manlike -- we have no idea of their scale yet, but they are bulky things, anthropomorphic hominids. Mammalian reptiles (human-looking snakes, the females don't have to be very mammalian, but they should be female) with scaly-red skin and large black lidless eyes, forked tongues, almost nonexistent ears, and snake-like heads. (They must be alien without being frightening or repelling -- just different.)

Scotty  
ride  
Sulu  
sea

Snake  
OK

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If possible, these aliens should have a vivid sense of personality.  
Calm, monkey-like, curious, aware.

ANGLE ON BEM

He listens for a moment, then makes a grunting sound, very much like those the aborigines have been making.

BEM  
(calling)  
Uh-Rrrookk! Uh-Rrrookk!

ANGLE ON ABORIGINES

They perk up and look off toward Bem's direction.

BEM

BEM  
(louder)  
Uhh-Rrookkk! Uhh-Rroooooookkk!!

ANGLE ON ABORIGINES

They begin moving in Bem's direction.

BEM

Seeing that they are approaching, he claps his hands delightedly and exclaims:

BEM  
Oh! Delicious! Action is!  
Exceptional consequences! Much  
excitement, and stimulation indeed!

Turns and skips backward, calling again.

CAMERA MOVES BACK TO WIDER ANGLE

As Bem leaves shot, curious aborigines follow him.

CAMERA MOVES WITH ABORIGINES...

And sees them stop in startlement, curiosity, wonder, and even sudden fright as they come upon --

KIRK AND SPOCK

Rising suddenly! They look about them --

CAMERA PULLS BACK

They are surrounded!

The aborigines move in....

KIRK AND SPOCK

KIRK

Can we fight them?

SPOCK

I doubt it.

WIDER ANGLE -- MATCHING

We see now why Spock doubts it. The natives are one and a half times the size of the spacemen. Even tall Spock only comes up to the chest of the smallest.

Two or three of the aborigines examine Kirk and Spock. Picking them up and turning them every which way and that, looking, peering, plucking, poking, chirping, sniffing, snorting -- tasting? (with quick flicks of forked tongues, of course) (Remember the apes in 2001 and the Cosmic Slab -- equivalent reactions -- except that these natives have nothing to fear. These space visitors are pipsqueaks.)

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK

(In the arms of a tall female...and looking very uncomfortable about it.)

Their primary motivation seems to be one of curiosity, Captain. -

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

(equally involved)

Yes, well let's -- unh, watch that -- let's hope they don't decide we're something edible.

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK

(taking him literally)

Oh, I doubt that, Captain. They appear to be --

(peering into the mouth of the aborigine holding him)

*Let's see how  
him create  
oddly by their  
deserved point.*

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SPOCK (CONT'D)

-- quite herbivorous. Plant eaters. Probably they live quite well off the trees.

KIRK

KIRK

That's very reassuring.

ANGLE

Abruptly, the natives make a decision about the strange creatures they have been examining. (They examine a tricorder -- it chirps at them -- and they drop it in fright. But it is still attached to Spock via a strap, and the native can't figure out how to pry it off.) The creatures pick up their two captives, slinging them under their arms or over their shoulders and carrying them off through the woods.

CAMERA PULLS BACK

Bem is shown peering cautiously after them. As the last of the natives disappears, Bem follows, chirping softly to himself.

BEM

Heh heh heh aheh. Oh, yes.  
Much pleased with events.

*scott log.*

*end act I  
act II*

*File Cont*

DISSOLVE TO:

INTERIOR BRIDGE -- SCOTTY AND SULU

SCOTTY

Have you found them yet, Sulu?

SULU

It's a big planet, Mr. Scott.

SCOTTY

Well, they can't be far. We know where we put them down.

(turning to M'ress  
at communications panel.)

Have you had any luck, Lt. M'ress?

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ANGLE ON M'RESS

M'RESS

They don't answer their communicators, Mr. Scott. And I can't get a lock on them at all. It's as if their communicators have been dismantled -- or shorted out.

*the comm. signal*

ANGLE ON SCOTTY

SCOTTY

Well, keep trying --  
(to Sulu)  
You too.

ANGLE

SULU

(a beat)  
I guess I owe you ten quatloos, sir.

SCOTTY

It's not a bet I wanted to win --  
(he looks glum, then:)  
Tell you what, I'll wager another ten quatloos that you find them in the next hour.

SULU

Deal.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR PLANET -- OR MAYBE IT'S AN INTERIOR. IT'S A GROTTA-LIKE SHELTER, THE EQUIVALENT OF A CAVE, WITHIN A LARGE HOLLOWED TREE. VERY LARGE.

Kirk and Spock, mused but not trussed, are being guarded by a huge red-skinned aborigine.

KIRK

How come we always end up like this?

SPOCK

I assume that's a rhetorical question, Captain, not requiring an answer.

ANGLE

KIRK

I was just expressing my curiosity at our ability to get into these kinds of situations.

SPOCK

Fate, Captain, fate.

KIRK

(looking at him)

Fate? Spock?

ANGLE ON BOTH, FAVORING SPOCK

SPOCK

Obviously, it is a more satisfactory explanation than to believe in our own inability to control the course of events.

KIRK

*Line used too much.*

KIRK

I doubt that.

(looks toward aborigine guard)

Why don't you try, uh -- your Vulcan nerve pinch...?

WIDER ANGLE

Spock eyes the aborigine warily....

SPOCK

Captain -- I'm only a Vulcan. There are limits.

KIRK

Also studying the guard....

KIRK

The things must have nerves....

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ANGLE ON SPOCK

Scanning with his tricorder. He shrugs. He gets up and moves toward the native. He reaches up. He grasps the creature's shoulder....

The aborigine looks down at him for a moment. Blankly. Then calmly hurls him across the cave.

ANGLE ON SPOCK

Hitting the back wall of the cave.

Kirk comes and helps him sit up.

KIRK

Nice try....

SPOCK

Thank you, Captain.

Spock fingers the bump on his head gently.

DISSOLVE TO:

DISTANT ANGLE, EXTERIOR -- BEM IN FOREGROUND, STUDYING NATIVES, SCANNING KIRK AND SPOCK

BEM

Pro-ceeding exceedingly!

He rummages around in his sample pouch for something...and --

CLOSER ANGLE

Communicator falls out and pops open.

LT. M'RESS (FILTERED)

Enterprise calling Captain Kirk!

Enterprise calling Captain Kirk!

Come in please!



CLOSE UP -- BEM

*mon alien  
line*  
6  
Oops!

BEM

He picks up the communicator.

BEM

Commander Bem here. Speak please.

*cut* BRIDGE ANGLE -- SCOTTY

SCOTTY

(looking very puzzled)

Commander Bem -- where is the Captain?!!

*interest* BEM *Scott is needed.*

Glances off toward aborigines.

BEM

Much busy presently.

SCOTTY

SCOTTY

Where is Mr. Spock?!!

BEM

BEM

Also much busy presently.

SCOTTY

SCOTTY

(annoyed)

Busy with what?!!

BEM

BEM

(innocently)

Busy with aborigines, Mr. Scott.  
Studying progresses.

SCOTTY

SCOTTY

Studying...?

(insistent)

Commander Bem, what's going on?

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BEM

BEM  
(verrry innocently)  
Will communicate with you later, Mr.  
Scott. Am also much busy presently.

He folds up the communicator and puts it back into his  
pouch.

BEM  
(talking to himself)  
Must be much careful, arms....

BRIDGE ANGLE -- SCOTTY AND SULU

SCOTTY  
Did you get a fix on him?

SULU  
I did -- but he seems to be alone.  
There aren't any human or Vulcan life  
forms anywhere near him. There's some  
kind of interference --  
(checking)  
-- and now Commander Bem's communicator  
has disappeared off the screen. I can't  
keep a lock on him.

SCOTTY

SCOTTY  
Well, that's the darnedest thing --  
(to M'ress in B.G.)  
Try to raise Commander Bem again.  
(to Sulu)  
And keep scanning -- for all of them.

SULU

SULU  
(already at work)  
Aye aye, Mr. Scott. But this time I'm  
not betting on the outcome.

DISSOLVE TO:

KIRK AND SPOCK

SPOCK

I would guess that they are pre-neolithic. They use tools, but they have no sense of permanency.

(he scans with his tricorder.)

KIRK

Say, Spock, do you think you could do something with that tricorder so that we could use it to signal Scotty?

Spock looks at the tricorder as if seeing it for the very first time.

SPOCK

It might take a while, and I couldn't guarantee that it would work, but I might be able to use the ultra-wave sensors as transceiver circuits...  
(thoughtfully)

It is certainly worth a try. Even if we can't establish voice contact, I might still be able to send a Starfleet code signal.

He starts to work.

DISSOLVE TO:

SAME SCENE -- AN HOUR LATER

Spock has the tricorder partially disassembled. Kirk keeps an eye on the natives. Many of them are beginning to gather at a wide joining of the tree branches, a kind of a clearing.

They begin pulling coconut-like fruits from the lower branches of the tree.

CLOSER ANGLE

As they break open the fruits and begin stuffing themselves. It is obvious that there is not enough to go around. There is some squabbling over the pieces.

ANGLE ON "CAVE"

The aborigine guarding them sniffs eagerly, rises and moves off in the direction of the "feast."

KIRK

Rises.

KIRK

Spock, look at this.

SPOCK

Puts down tricorder and comes forward....

SPOCK

It must be feeding time, Captain.

MED ANGLE

KIRK

We might be able to escape....

SPOCK

It would mean going down that branching, Captain -- we would have to pass very close to them. Undoubtedly, they would see us.... On the other hand, it might be worth a try.... Let's see, now, if we...

ANGLE ON NEARBY BRANCH

As Spock continues talking. We see a slug-like thing come creeping down a branch toward Spock's tricorder. It looks like a tentacle with a hand instead of a head. It grabs the tricorder Spock is working on and begins to creep off with it.

RODDEMBERG.COM  
From script and lines  
Two lines

KIRK AND SPOCK

Hearing a noise, they turn and see --

THE THING CREEPING UP A BRANCH

It moves along quickly, grasping the tricorder firmly.

KIRK AND SPOCK

Captain!

SPOCK

KIRK

Get it!

MED ANGLE -- CAMERA MOVES WITH

They leap after it. But they are too late. It is too high up and lost in the upper branches. It disappears into a tangle of vines and creepers.

DEJECTED ANGLE

KIRK

There goes our chance to contact Scotty.

SPOCK

Only momentarily. I can dismantle one of those monitoring devices you're carrying on your belt and try again....

KIRK

We'd better keep a closer watch, this time.

SPOCK

(staring up after the creature)  
A very odd creature, Captain. Very odd. I've never come across anything like that before.

KIRK

KIRK  
Well, you have now.

CUT TO:

EXTERIOR -- BRANCHES, AND THE "THING" THAT STOLE SPOCK'S TRICORDER

We follow it as it creeps up one branch, down the next, over hill and dale, so to speak. It moves like an inchworm, but it moves with steady purpose.

And it moves straight to --

ANGLE ON BEM

It's his arm.

He picks it up and fastens it into place. The "arm" settles itself like a creature getting comfortable and Bem is holding Spock's dismantled tricorder.

ANOTHER ANGLE ON BEM

Pandronians have detachable arms. And legs. And heads. And other things. Bem tests his joints, flexes them, chirping softly. He is happy to see the tricorder.

BEM

Much pleased, arm. Much pleased, legs.  
Much pleased to see cooperation of unity  
into whole Bem.

(putting the tricorder  
into the sample pouch.)

Important to keep starfleet men without  
appliances. Would invalidate everything.  
Must keep them defenseless.

He moves off through the branches toward Kirk and Spock and the aborigines....

DISSOLVE TO:

KIRK AND SPOCK

They are at the mouth of the grotto-like shelter.

KIRK

I think we ought to try it.

He is looking speculatively at the aborigines.

KIRK (CONT'D)

If we win their trust, we can just walk away from them.

SPOCK

SPOCK

An admirable intention....

MED. ANGLE

Kirk approaches the aborigines carefully. Slowly.

ANGLE ON ABORIGINES

They are still fussing around the food trees. The younger (only about six feet tall) natives are going without because the bigger and older natives are reaching most of the food.

KIRK

Picks up a discarded coconut shell and a vine.

CLOSE UP OF HANDS

As he ties vine around shell to make a sling....

KIRK

Approaching natives. They look at him curiously. He swings the sling around over his head and they back off a few steps in wonderment. Not fright.

Kirk swings -- and --

ANGLE ON TREE BRANCH

As vine loops over it.

ANGLE ON KIRK

Taking both ends of the vine and pulling.

ANGLE ON TREE BRANCH

As Kirk pulls it down.

KIRK

Holding on tight.

KIRK

Mr. Spock, give me a hand.

MED. ANGLE

Spock comes up and helps pull the branch down.

KIRK

This should provide them with enough food.



ANGLE ON BRANCH AND NATIVES

The tallest of the natives are already picking at the coconuts they could not reach before.

KIRK

KIRK

That's not good enough. We want to feed all of them.

He turns to the closest native. Offers him the end of the vine.

KIRK (CONT'D)

You. Help? Pull. Okay?

He pantomimes.

MED. ANGLE

The aborigine takes the vine and pulls gently.

Kirk, Spock and the aborigine all pull together. A second and third aborigine come up and start pulling on the vine.

ANGLE -- THE BRANCH.

It gives quite a bit....

ANGLE -- KIRK, SPOCK, AND NATIVES, PULLING

ANGLE -- THE TREE AND THE BRANCH

It bends. It be-e-ends.... -- and it snaps.

ANGLE -- THE BRANCH, AND PART OF THE TREE COME CRASHING DOWN, BRINGING OTHER BRANCHES, VINES, TREES, FRUIT, ETC. WITH IT.

The NOISE is loud. Loud enough to send all the natives scattering.

ANGLE

Natives running off, disappearing.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Same.

RETURN TO SHOT -- KIRK AND SPOCK STANDING UPRIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF RUINED BRANCHES AND TREES, LOTS OF COCONUT FRUITS.

Kirk picks one of the fruits and sniffs it. Spock does likewise.

KIRK  
Plomek soup it isn't.

SPOCK  
It is sufficient for their needs, Captain.

KIRK  
I hope so.

MED. ANGLE

Kirk moving toward curious young native, offering fruit.

ANGLE ON CREATURE

Eyeing Kirk warily, but eyeing fruit eagerly.

KIRK -- OFFERING FRUIT TO NATIVE

Creature snatches the fruit and disappears up a branch to begin opening it.

ANGLE -- OTHER NATIVES WATCHING

They begin to move cautiously out of their hiding places.

ANGLE

Natives approaching fallen tree.

ANGLE

Natives gorging themselves on its fruit.

ANGLE -- KIRK AND SPOCK WATCHING

KIRK  
I think -- this may be our opportunity to escape.

They turn and begin to move off....

CAMERA MOVES WITH THEM -- STOPS WITH THEM

They are confronted by a large native, holding the vine and nut sling. He looks at them hungrily and holds out the sling. ("Please, sir, can I have some more?")

KIRK

I think he's still hungry.

SPOCK

I'd better go back to work on the monitor. We're going to need it.

They turn and march back to the "cave".

ANGLE

They settle down in the cave. Spock begins work on one of the monitor beacons on Kirk's belt.

*act III*

DISSOLVE TO:

BRIDGE

SULU

(looking through his viewer)

Mr. Scott, I think the interference we're getting is artificial. It's too localized -- and it seems to be selectively blocking out whatever we try to get through it.

SCOTTY

I'd better ready a security squad then. We're going to have to go down there and search for them.

(to Sulu)

See if you can pinpoint the source of that interference.

SULU

I already have. It's about seven kilometers from where we set them down.

*Open to make a break for it - give trigger, camera carried back to cave - End Act II*

PROOFREADING.COM

CLOSE ANGLE -- SCOTTY

SCOTTY

Aye, that's odd.

(very puzzled)

I think that Commander Bem is going to have some explaining to do.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXTERIOR OF PLANET -- COMMANDER ARI BN BEM LURKING IN TREES.

Scanning Kirk and Spock.

BEM

Important nexus approaches. Approaches now.... Right-thinking action...? This one must, if necessary, but prefers...not. Kirk Captain, please to make choice soon.

CAMERA MOVES IN TOWARD NATIVES, TOWARD KIRK AND SPOCK...

ANGLE ON KIRK AND SPOCK

Studying natives. The natives are restless....

SPOCK

Captain, I believe we may have made a serious mistake.

KIRK

What's that?

SPOCK

Very thoughtful.

SPOCK

The aborigines -- they're hungry.

KIRK

KIRK

Well, there's nothing more we can do to help them, Spock. We've pulled down every branch in the area....

ANGLE ON BOTH

Exactly.

SPOCK

KIRK

????

SPOCK

They've overeaten, Captain. They've been stuffing themselves all afternoon. They've wasted a lot of food -- in fact, they have used up quite a bit of their available food supply.

ANGLE ON HUNGRY ABORIGINES -- SPOCK'S VOICE OVER

SPOCK (CONT'D)

We have only temporarily alleviated their hunger, Captain. In the long run, we have increased their chances of starvation -- there is no longer any more food available for them. By making it too easy for them to feed, we used up their food supply for many days to come.

KIRK

We have made a mistake, Mr. Spock. A very serious one.

SPOCK

Hopefully, Captain, these creatures are resilient enough to survive our meddling.

CLOSER ANGLE ON ABORIGINES

One of the children is trying to gnaw at the coconut shell that Kirk used as a sling. The vine is still attached. The child begins swinging the sling. Accidentally he lets go -- it strikes another child, who goes crying to his mother.

ANOTHER ABORIGINE

Notices what has happened. Picks up the sling. Begins testing it as a weapon.

*One of the children  
uses the coconut  
shell as a sling.*

WIDER ANGLE

The natives are pacing back and forth, looking for more food.

MATCHING SHOT

Natives pacing in B.G. Kirk and Spock in F.G.

KIRK

Mr. Spock, I think you should hurry with that signalling device. I believe these creatures are about to discover homicide.

SPOCK

Well, you would teach them the use of tools.

KIRK

Mr. Spock, the natives are beginning to look verrrry ugly.

MEDIUM ANGLE

Spock puts down the device he is working on and comes forward.

SPOCK

They look exactly the same as before, Captain. And ugliness is an arbitrary judgment in any case.

KIRK

(gives him a look)

Mr. Spock, must you always take everything so literally?

ANGLE ON BRANCH OVERHEAD

Bem's arm. Creeping. Creeping....

Moves downward toward Spock's work area....

*Check*

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CAMERA MOVES WITH

As arm grasps Spock's jury-rigged device, and --

ANGLE

-- is immediately caught in Mr. Spock's carefully concealed snare trap. Ha! Gotcha!

ANGLE ON KIRK AND SPOCK

They turn at the sound, and come back to the arm caught in the snare.

They study it, as it swings back and forth between them, still struggling to get free.

KIRK

You were right, Spock.

SPOCK

Of course, that's my job. I thought I recognized this creature. Normally it would function as Commanderr Bem's arm, but it is also able to function independently. Obviously, Commander Bem is more than just one alien. He is a colony of several symbiotic aliens who have pooled their functions and their intelligence.

KIRK

(studying the swinging arm)

It's been a long time since I built a rabbit-snare. It's nice to know I haven't lost the knack.

(moves to tie up the arm and remove it from the snare.)

I expect that we should be hearing from Commander Bem quite soon. Perhaps we can make a trade. Our communicators for his -- arm.

SPOCK  
I hope he hurries, Captain.

He points.

ANGLE ON ABORIGINE

Swinging the rock quite viciously -- and smashing holes in tree trunks.

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK  
If he gets it into his head to come after us, it could be rather uncomfortable.

KIRK  
(agreeing)  
Quite.

ANGLE ON ABORIGINE

He straightens. He looks toward Kirk and Spock. He begins moving toward them.

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK  
Speak of the devil....

SPOCK  
Theology, Captain...?

KIRK  
Never mind.

ANGLE ON ABORIGINE

Still approaching --

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WIDER ANGLE

Abruptly, all the natives scatter in fear. A sudden high-pitched whirring sound, and --

SWISH-PAN TO:

BEM!

Standing on high branch looking down at them all. Holding a phaser which he points at Kirk and Spock.

BEM

Kirk Captain. Please to release arm of this one.

KIRK AND SPOCK

KIRK

I don't suppose the Vulcan nerve pinch would work on him...?

SPOCK

Obviously, not.

*which one of "him"?*

KIRK

Then, I guess we have no choice.

Kirk starts to put the arm down, when suddenly:

ANGLE ON BEM

The rock on the sling comes hurtling toward him from out of the bushes.

It misses Bem, but he is startled. Other rocks come flying after. It is the natives in the bushes. They are throwing the rocks.

ANGLE ON NATIVES

Gibbering in fear, but throwing rocks, coconuts, branches, anything....

BEM

Is sufficiently startled to fire his phaser.

KIRK AND SPOCK

Each leap to one side. The phaser bolt passes harmlessly between them. Nice.

BEM

Whirls to fire at the natives -- but he hasn't a good target.

KIRK

Grabs overhead vine. Swings -- like Tarzan -- and CAMERA MOVES WITH HIM (For God's sake, fully animate this) as he kicks Bem off the branch, knocking the phaser out of his hand.

SPOCK

Grabs the phaser.

KIRK AND SPOCK

Bring Bem to the ground -- and pull their communicators out of his sample pouch.

Kirk is about to open the communicator and call the ship, when abruptly --

ANGLE ON CLEARING

Transporter sound. TRANSPORTER EFFECT PILES UP. Scotty, Sulu, and Security Squad, armed with phaser rifles, appears.

KIRK AND SPOCK

Spock holding phaser on Bem. Bem looking very resigned, fitting his arm back into place. Kirk and Spock turn toward rescue party.

RESCUE PARTY

Finishes beaming in.

KIRK

SCOTTY  
Captain! Are you all right?

SCOTTY AND SULU

KIRK  
Couldn't be better. Where were you  
when we needed you?

SCOTTY  
I owe you twenty-five quatloos, Mr. Sulu.  
They didn't need us after all.

DISSOLVE TO:

ENTERPRISE IN ORBIT

DISSOLVE TO:

INTERIOR BRIEFING ROOM

KIRK, SPOCK, BEM, SCOTTY, SULU, ANYONE ELSE NECESSARY.

BEM  
(is standing and explaining)  
....so you see, Kirk Captain, this one  
was testing yourselves. Planet Pandro  
must determine if Terrans can be civilized  
without ~~any~~ weaponry. Unfortunately,  
circumstances invalidated test. You proved  
ability to survive and to cope with unusual  
situation, but --

KIRK

KIRK  
We also overpowered you.

BEM

BEM  
Much worse than that, Kirk Captain. You have shamed me. You have forced me to use a weapon against another entity. Although I did so out of fear and anger, I have committed an ultimate sin. I have allowed my passions to outweigh my reason and my cooperation of parts.

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK  
(Nodding. He understands.)  
Quite.

ANGLE ON BEM

BEM  
Mr. Spock understands. Much goodness. Thank you. This one, shamed, must now dissemble. Apologies all.

Bem "dissembles". His various parts come apart. His arms detach. His legs detach. His torso separates into two component creatures. His head detaches. Each part is a separate entity.

SPOCK

*more from  
Bem,  
then Spock  
else Spock too  
Angeline*

SPOCK  
Bem is a variety of creatures, Captain -- was a variety of creatures. They made a mistake. The individual parts must now return to Pandro where they will be incorporated into new individuals. Individuals that will not repeat this mistake. The Bem we know has ceased to exist as a viable cooperation.

KIRK

KIRK  
(sadly)  
It is a harsh penalty for a mistake.

He watches as the parts of Bem creep out of the room.

KIRK (CONT'D)

I think I'll stick with the Starfleet system. When we make a mistake, we try to correct it -- and learn from it so we never have to make that mistake again.

SCOTTY

SCOTTY

Aye. That lets us make a whole series of new mistakes.

KIRK

KIRK

That's not very funny, Mr. Scott. I just hope we haven't permanently damaged the natives' ability to survive on this planet...

DISSOLVE TO:

ENTERPRISE BREAKING ORBIT AND MOVING OFF FROM PLANET.

DISSOLVE TO:

SURFACE OF PLANET

Where several of the natives are working together with a vine looped over a branch, pulling it down, so that all can feed....

Kirk's question remains unanswered.  
For at least a millennia or two.

FADEOUT.

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