

STAR TREK
"THE COUNTER-CLOCK INCIDENT"

John Culver

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STAR TREK

"THE COUNTER-CLOCK INCIDENT"

CAST

CAPTAIN JAMES T. KIRK
MISTER SPOCK
DR. LEONARD MCCOY
SCOTT
UHURA
SULU
AREX

COMMODORE ROBERT APRIL
DR. SARAH APRIL

KARLA FIVE
KARL FOUR

STAR TREK
"THE COUNTER-CLOCK INCIDENT"

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - USS ENTERPRISE

The USS Enterprise moving through a field of stars.

KIRK'S VOICE
Captain's Log, Stardate 6770.3. The Enterprise is on course for the planet Babel, where ambassadors from all Federation planets are waiting to honor the Enterprise's distinguished passenger:

INT. BRIDGE - CLOSE-UP - ROBERT APRIL

A 75-year-old man whose looks belie his age. He has a full head of grey hair; he is rather trim and in good physical condition. He is wearing what we would consider a "full dress" uniform, more formal than the Enterprise crew. He stands next to Capt. Kirk, who is seated in his command chair. Also on the bridge, at their stations, are Spock, Uhura, Arce and Sulu.

KIRK'S VOICE
(continuing)
Commodore Robert April, first captain of the USS Enterprise, and for the past 20 years, Federation Ambassador-at-large. Now 75 years old, Commodore April has reached mandatory retirement age.

WIDEN TO INCLUDE KIRK

APRIL
No matter where I've traveled in the galaxy, Jim, this bridge is more like home than anywhere else.

KIRK
Yes, Commodore, I know the feeling...

APRIL
To me she was always like my child... I was there in the San Francisco Navy Yards when her unit components were built.

ANGLE ON ELEVATOR DOORS

They open, revealing Dr. McCoy and Sarah April, slightly younger than her husband but also with grey hair. She is dressed in high fashion, reminding us of the circles of Federation society she travels in. She carries a single flower, with an intricate multi-colored blossom.

THREE SHOT - MCCOY, KIRK, SARAH

MCCOY

Jim, I didn't realize how many of the tools I use in sick bay were designed by Sarah.

SARAH

As the first medical officer aboard a ship equipped with warp drive, I'm afraid I had to come up with new ideas all the time.

KIRK

Your modesty is unnecessary, Mrs. April. Your achievements as a pioneer doctor in space are well known.

MCCOY

And it's nice to know the lady is as intelligent as she is beautiful... much like the flower she carries.

SARAH

Oh, Doctor, flattery will get you everywhere. But I'm afraid my flower is dying...

KIRK

It's a native of Capella IV, isn't it?

INSERT - FLOWER

SARAH

Yes, but it has a life span of only a few hours. This morning it was a seedling; within a few hours it will be dead. It is one of the most beautiful flowers in the galaxy, but also the shortest-lived.

ANGLE ON SPOCK'S STATION

SPOCK

Excuse me, Captain. You asked to be notified when we made visual contact with the Beta Niobe nova.

CONTINUED:

KIRK
Thank you, Mr. Spock. Mrs. April,
you are about to see another of the
galaxy's most beautiful sights...the
Beta Niobe supernova.

APRIL
We've seen many novae, Jim; stars exploding
in space over millions of miles as they go dead. *

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN

What they see: the exploded beauty of a former star. Its red
and orange flames lick out at the Enterprise, the yellow and
white gases exploding within other explosions.

SARAH
It is beautiful -- but also very
deadly.

SPOCK
We are traveling at a safe distance
from the nova, Mrs. April.

TWO SHOT - KIRK & APRIL

APRIL
Beta Niobe -- you were present when
the star first started its explosion, Jim. *

KIRK
Yes, we were, Commodore. But I didn't
know you kept up with our activities.

APRIL
A courtesy Star Fleet extends to former
starship captains -- your ship's log is
always available to me. You were trapped
in the planet's past, about to be tried
as a witch, just before the star went nova,
and started to explode. *

KIRK
Yes, it was a narrow escape -- for
McCoy and Spock as well as for me.

ANGLE ON MCCOY

MCCOY
I was trapped in the planet's ice
age -- and I've never been so cold
in my life.

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FAVORING SPOCK AND KIRK

SPOCK
Captain...sensors are picking up
an unidentified object...traveling
at an incredible speed, presently on
collision course with the Enterprise.

KIRK
Put the ship on red alert...how fast
is it traveling, Spock?

The red warning lights begin to flash and we hear the sound of
the alarm.

SPOCK
At a speed that should be impossible
to achieve...something on the order
of Warp 36.

KIRK
That's impossible...nothing can travel
that fast.

WIDEN TO INCLUDE APRIL

APRIL
No natural object has ever been
recorded as traveling at that speed!

SPOCK
I believe it is not a natural object,
but a ship.

KIRK
Who would have the technology to
build a ship that could travel at
such a speed?

SPOCK
No known race, Captain. Nevertheless,
it will contact us in 1.4 minutes.

KIRK
Hard about helmsman. Change course
for 24 Mark 7.

EXT. SPACE - USS ENTERPRISE

The Enterprise, moving up and toward us, the saucer portion filling
the screen so we can read the insignia NCC 1701.

INT. BRIDGE - SPOCK

SPOCK
Correction, captain. The ship was
on a collision course only by
coincidence. It is apparently
heading for the heart of the Beta
Niobe nova.

KIRK

KIRK
That's a course of self-destruction.
Lt. Uhura, open hailing frequencies.
I want to talk to that ship's captain.

UHURA at her console position.

UHURA
Captain, that ship is not responding.
They're ignoring our request to establish
communication.

WIDE SHOT

KIRK
Alright, if they won't talk, we'll
slow them down...Mr. Sulu, put a
tractor beam on that ship.

SPOCK
Is that advisable, Captain?

KIRK
It's more advisable than letting them
burn up in the supernova, Mr. Spock.

SPOCK
I mean, we don't know what would happen
if we put a tractor beam on a ship
traveling at such a speed.

CONTINUED:

KIRK
Well, we're about to find out.
Mr. Sulu, is our tractor beam having
any effect?

SULU

SULU
Tractor beam on and operating, Captain.
But the alien ship is still traveling
under its own power.

AREX
We're having a small effect on
other ship's speed, Captain. It has
dropped to a speed of Warp 32.

UHURA
Captain, they are making visual contact.

KIRK
I thought they might. Put it on the
screen, lieutenant.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN

An image appears: a young-appearing, beautiful woman with brunette hair, somewhat reminiscent of a 1940s earth hairstyle. She speaks urgently, but the language is unintelligible to us.

(*NOTE: The following speech should be heard BACKWARD.)

KARLA FIVE
(filtered)
(I am on a priority mission. Your
beam is slowing my progress. Release
my ship at once, or I am doomed.)

The image snaps to black. Communication has been cut off.

ANGLE ON KIRK AND APRIL

KIRK
I've never heard that language before.

APRIL
Nor I, in all my travels to planets
in our galaxy.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

KIRK
Run that message through the
universal translator, Lt. Uhura.
Perhaps it can tell us what language
she is speaking in.

UHURA

She implements the listening device in her ear.

UHURA
The universal translator has no
answer, Captain. That's no known
language in the galaxy.

WIDEN TO INCLUDE KIRK

KIRK
Try the universal translator as a
decoding instrument, lieutenant.
Perhaps that message was in some
form of code.

UHURA

UHURA
Captain, the universal translator
has the answer. The woman is speaking
the same universal language we speak,
but she is speaking in reverse!

ANGLE ON AREX AND KIRK

AREX
That's why it sounded so familiar.
Like a tape running backward might
sound.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

KIRK
Lieutenant, let's hear that tape
backward...which should sound
forward to us.

UHURA
Yes sir, on the screen.

ANGLE ON SCREEN

The same message as before, but now we can all understand it.

KARLA FIVE
(filtered)
I am on a priority mission. Your
beam is slowing my progress. Release
my ship at once, or I am doomed.

BACK TO BRIDGE SHOT

KIRK
Open hailing frequencies again,
lieutenant. Tell her she is endangering
her life if she remains on her present
course. Mr. Spock, how many life forms
aboard that vessel?

SPOCK
Just one, Captain...the woman we
saw on the screen.

UHURA
No use, sir. She's refusing to answer.

INSERT - ARM OF CAPTAIN'S CHAIR

A light on the arm of the chair flashes; we hear Scotty signalling
from the engineering deck.

WIDEN TO KIRK

KIRK
Yes, Scotty, what is it?

INT. ENGINEERING DECK - CONTROL PANEL

Scott over the controls, talking to Kirk.

SCOTT
Captain, the engines are buckling!
We can't keep up at this speed...
the Enterprise wasn't meant to travel
at such a pace.

BACK TO BRIDGE SHOT

KIRK
Mr. Arex, what is our speed?

AREX
Now at Warp 11, Captain.

KIRK
Mr. Spock, how long until the
alien vessel makes contact with
the Beta Niobe nova?

SPOCK
Three minutes, 42.7 seconds.

Kirk pushes the button on his arm chair.

KIRK
Scotty, we'd burn up in the nova
before our engines would go...I'm
trying to stop that ship from
destroying itself.

INT. ENGINEERING DECK - MED. SHOT

SCOTT
Aye, Captain, but we canna' travel
this fast much longer.

KIRK'S VOICE
(filtered)
Give me three-and-a-half minutes,
Scotty.

INT. BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING KIRK AND AREX

AREX
Still increasing speed, Captain.
Warp 14. Warp 15.

KIRK
I have no choice...I have to release
the tractor beam. I can't destroy
this ship and 430 people to save one
person. Mr. Sulu, release our beam.
Lt. Uhura, I want you to repeat a
message to that ship over and over
until she acknowledges us. Tell her
that in less than three minutes she is
going to burn up in the Beta Niobe
nova. Tell her to reverse course at
once.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

UHURA

Yes sir.

ANGLE ON KIRK AND SULU

SULU

Sir, I can't release the tractor beam.

KIRK

What do you mean, Mr. Sulu?

SULU

Our controls are inoperative.
The ship isn't responding like it
should.

KIRK

Go to manual override.

Sulu's fingers flash over the control panel.

SULU

Not responding, sir.

WIDEN

KIRK

We've got to release that beam,
or we're going to follow that ship
into the nova!

SPOCK

Our speed is now warp 20...and
the other ship will contact the
nova in one minute, 58.3 seconds.

Kirk turns to the Aprils.

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

I'm sorry, Commodore...Mrs. April.
It looks as though we may not reach
Babel.

ANGLE ON SARAH AND ROBERT APRIL - MED. SHOT

They are calm. They have been in similar situations in the past.
Mrs. April still holds her Capellan flower, its bloom now wilting.

CONTINUED:

APRIL

As starship personnel, we were always prepared to give our lives, Captain.

SARAH

(the flower evident)

We are still starship personnel, Captain.

BACK TO KIRK

KIRK

There is still one chance...after that ship enters the nova, it should burn up, and break contact with our tractor beam. Mr. Spock, how long will we have to apply full braking power and execute course change?

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK

We are up to Warp 22 and increasing, Captain. We shall have 42.85 seconds to correct our course after the alien ship enters the nova.

BACK TO KIRK

KIRK

You heard that, Mr. Sulu. As soon as that ship is destroyed, I want a course change to 17 Mark 211.

SULU

Aye, aye, sir.

Kirk pushes the button on his chair's arm to summon Scotty.

KIRK

Mr. Scott, we're going to apply full braking power in a minute.

SCOTT'S VOICE

(filtered)

Aye, Captain. Our engines are almost gone. They've only lasted this long at this speed because the alien vessel is pulling us with our own tractor beam.

SPOCK

The alien vessel will contact Beta Niobe in 52.3 seconds, Captain.

EXT. SPACE - ALIEN VESSEL

A sleek, small craft, heading at incredible speed through a field of stars.

EXT. SPACE - BETA NIOBE

In all its glory, a huge fireball of gases hanging in the sky. It is a swirling mass of reds, oranges, yellows, whites.

INT. BRIDGE - SPOCK - MED. SHOT

SPOCK
Contact in 39 seconds...38...37...

EXT. SPACE - BETA NIOBE

The silhouette of the alien ship is now visible, heading directly for the heart of the Beta Niobe nova. Within seconds it should be cinders.

INT. BRIDGE

SPOCK
13...12...11...

KIRK
Get ready to execute course change.
Mr. Sulu.

SULU
Yes, sir.

EXT. SPACE - BETA NIOBE

The silhouette of the alien vessel is now a tiny point, but still visible to us. As we watch, it disappears into the multi-colors of the nova, presumably destroyed instantly.

INT. BRIDGE

KIRK
Now, Mr. Sulu!

Sulu pushes the proper buttons on his console -- but!

SULU
Something's wrong, Captain! We are still being pulled by the alien ship!

KIRK
Impossible! It should have been destroyed instantly!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

AREX
Apparently it was not, Captain. Our tractor beam is still connected to her.

SPOCK
And we are still increasing speed... contact with the nova in 35.18 seconds.

KIRK
That other ship may have been able to survive the heat of a nova, but the Enterprise can't.

He pushes a button on his chair's arm.

KIRK
Mr. Scott, how about that full braking power?

INT. ENGINEERING DECK - MED. SHOT

SCOTT
We're as bad off as before, Captain. We have no control of the ship as long as that alien lassie has us in tow.

BACK TO BRIDGE

SPOCK
Contact in 20 seconds.

KIRK
Keep trying those controls, Mr. Sulu! That alien ship must be destroyed by now!

SULU
Still no change, Captain.

Kirk rushes forward to the navigation console.

KIRK
It's got to work!

He operates the controls, but no results.

EXT. SPACE - BETA NICHE

Now it is the Enterprise we see heading for the heart of the nova.

INT. BRIDGE

14 seconds...15...12...

KIRK
Never mind, Mr. Spock, it's no
use...

ANGLE ON THE APRILS

Robert and Sarah side by side, his arm on her shoulder. She
clutches the flower in one hand. The petals droop, but it clings
to life for a few seconds more.

EXT. SPACE - BETA NIOBE

The Enterprise is dead center in our screen, accelerating away
from us, becoming smaller and smaller as it moves closer to Beta
Niobe.

Then it is gone, seemingly enveloped by the flames of the super-hot
exploded star.

INT. BRIDGE

But inside the crew is still there. The ship goes into a dizzy
spin, knocking all to the ground.

EXT. SPACE - GATEWAY

The USS Enterprise, lurching forward, thrown loose from space and
time. It comes toward us and moves up, the saucer portion filling
the screen. Multi-colored explosions all around. Are we in the
heart of the nova...or somewhere else?

Then, all is calm.

INT. BRIDGE

The ship stops spinning. The crew regain their footing and return
to their positions.

KIRK
We're...still here.

The Aprils get to their feet.

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KIRK

Lt. Uhurā, can you get us visual?

ANGLE ON SCREEN

There is static and flutter, then an image appears. Black stars hurtling toward us, in a sea of white. It is a reverse image of space as we know it.

APRIL

What?!

KIRK

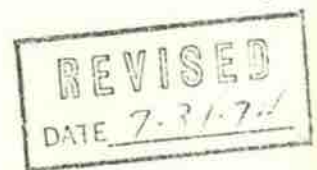
Where are we?

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

The USS Enterprise, flying backwards, through this reverse universe.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE



ACT TWO

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - USS ENTERPRISE - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

As we left it, moving in reverse in a sea of white filled with black shining stars.

KIRK'S VOICE

Captain's Log, Stardate 6770.6. The Enterprise has passed into the most alien landscape I have ever seen... we are in some reverse universe, where black stars shine in a white void. We are still in the tow of the alien ship, both of us having survived the extreme heat of the Beta Niobe nova.

INT. BRIDGE

SPOCK

We are in what should be termed an anti-matter universe, Captain. When we crossed over, everything as we know it became reversed.

INT. ENGINEERING DECK

SCOTT

This is Scott, calling the Captain.

INTERCUT KIRK & SCOTT

KIRK

Yes, Scotty, how are we doing down there?

SCOTT

Well, we just had to learn to run the ship all over again...every control is working in reverse.

KIRK

How are the engines?

SCOTT

They shouldn't still be with us... but they are.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

KIRK
 Alright, Lt. Uhura, we're going
 to contact that ship again. We
 need some answers.

CLOSE SHOT - SARAH APRIL

She looks at the flower she has been holding throughout this
 ordeal. It is in full bloom again!

SARAH
 Captain Kirk! The Capellan flower!

THREE SHOT - SARAH AND ROBERT APRIL, KIRK

APRIL
 I'm sure Captain Kirk has other
 problems beside your flower, dear...

SARAH
 You don't understand...before we
 entered this universe, it was about
 to die...and now it's in full bloom
 again.

KIRK
 How is that possible?

SARAH
 It's as if it were growing younger
 again...I can almost feel it while I'm
 holding it.

Sure enough, as we watch, her blossom retracts, the stem grows
 shorter, and the flower returns to the seed from which it grew.

INSERT - SARAH'S HAND

She holds nothing but a tiny seed.

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK
 Captain, the flower is not the only
 thing on board that is growing
 younger...

TWO SHOT - KIRK AND SPOCK

KIRK
 Explain, Spock.

SPOCK
 Ship's chronometers are also running
 backward.

INSERT - CHRONOMETER

We see the ship's timing instruments moving backward, the numbers rolling by in reverse.

ANGLE ON SPOCK

SPOCK

The flow of time is reversed in this universe. The longer we stay here, the younger we will become.

TWO SHOT - KIRK AND UHURA

KIRK

If that were our only problem, we wouldn't have any problems, Mr. Spock.

UHURA

The alien ship is responding to our call, Captain. Visual contact established and on the screen.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN

The face of the woman we saw before reappears.

KARLA FIVE

(filtered)

Your interference almost cost me my life. Why didn't you release my ship as I asked?

TWO SHOT - KIRK AND SPOCK

KIRK

(to Spock)

I can understand her now, without the aid of the universal translator.

SPOCK

Apparently our brains are also working in reverse, Captain, so we can now understand her "language." That is why the ship seems to be operating in reverse to us.

KIRK

(to viewscreen)

I am Captain James T. Kirk of the USS Enterprise. We tried to prevent you from entering the Beta Niobe nova. We assumed your ship would burn up.

INTERCUT KIRK AND VIEWSCREEN

KARLA FIVE

(filtered)

I had to return to my own universe, Captain Kirk. To do so, I had to pass through what you call the Beta Niobe nova, into the Amphion nova that exists here.

KIRK

Who are you? How did you come to be in our universe?

KARLA FIVE

(filtered)

I am an explorer of space. I was caught unaware when Amphion, previously a dead star, went nova and came to life. I was pulled into the star...but instead of burning up, I passed into a universe where everything operates in reverse to my universe.

KIRK

Our universe.

KARLA FIVE

(filtered)

Yes. My theory is that two stars going nova in the same place in both universes created a gateway...which I passed through.

APRIL

In her universe, a nova is a dead star which comes to life! And when the explosions of a nova in her universe and one in our universe occur together, it's possible to travel between the two universes!

*

KIRK

Then we must return the same way, through the two novas.

KARLA FIVE

(filtered)

That would be impossible, Captain. Amphion is no longer nova...it has begun its life as a star.

*

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ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN

KARLA FIVE

(filtered)

I am returning to my home world of Arret, Captain Kirk. I suggest you set a course to follow my ship. Perhaps our scientists can help solve your problem.

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

We have little choice...we are still connected to your ship by our own tractor beam.

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE AND ALIEN VESSEL - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

The smaller vessel leads the way, the Enterprise follows. Both ships are moving "tail first." Stars glow black, dark shades of blue, deep purple in the white void of space.

KIRK'S VOICE

Captain's Log, supplemental. We are in an anti-matter universe, growing younger instead of older. We are proceeding to Karla Five's planet, Arret...

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

Kirk, Spock, Scott and April seated around the table, the triangular viewer in the middle of the table.

KIRK

Gentlemen, I'm sure none of us mind growing younger instead of older for a change.

APRIL

It pleases me, Jim. If we stay here long enough, I'll no longer be at the mandatory retirement age.

SCOTT

Aye, it's a shame they put a man out to pasture just because he's reached a certain age.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

APRIL

Exactly, Mr. Scott. I'm still capable of giving full service to the Federation...

KIRK

Nevertheless, we must return home. And I'm open to suggestions.

SPOCK

It is logical that we must reproduce the conditions that brought us here. Two novas must occupy the same space in both universes in order to create a gateway for us to travel through. One star dying in our universe, and one star being born here would recreate the correct conditions.

APRIL

That would take a remarkable coincidence, Mister Spock.

SCOTT

Aye, the odds of it happening again would be too high to compute.

SPOCK

I must disagree, Commander Scott. I have computed them at over 52 quadrillion to one.

KIRK

(wryly)

Well, at least we have a chance.

EXT. SPACE - TWO SHIPS - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

Still flying backward, still in this reverse universe.

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CONTINUED:

CLOSE SHOT - VIEWSCREEN

Lt. Uhura's image fills the screen.

UHURA

(filtered)

Captain, we are approaching Arret.
Karla Five is asking if you are
prepared to beam down to the planet.

ANGLE ON KIRK

KIRK

Have Mr. Sulu establish a standard
orbit around the planet, Lieutenant.
Tell Karla Five that Mr. Spock,
Commodore April and myself will be
beaming down.

UHURA

Yes, sir.

INT. TRANSPORTER ROOM - SCOTT AT CONTROLS

Kirk, Spock and April are on the transporter pods.

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CONTINUED:

SCOTT

Karla Five has given us coordinates to beam down to her son's laboratory, Captain.

KIRK

Her son? We don't have time for children's games right now, Scotty, but beam us down.

SCOTT

Aye, sir.

He operates the controls. Kirk, Spock and April flicker and fade in the swirl of the transporter effect.

EXT. MODERN BUILDING - LONG SHOT - DAY

The steps of a modern building in what might pass for a city on 22nd century earth. The sky is a bright baby blue. We are at an extreme long shot, giving us a good view of the surrounding modern buildings, some grassy areas, sidewalks. We zoom in on the steps and see the three images of Kirk, Spock and April fade in. The glimmer of the transporter effect builds and fades.

Karla Five is there, at the entrance of the building, waiting to greet them.

MED. SHOT - ALL

KARLA FIVE

Good evening, gentlemen. I'm sorry you had to arrive on Arret in the middle of the night.

KIRK

But the sun is shining...

KARLA FIVE

Is it, Captain? What a funny thing to say...the moon is quite visible.

The CAMERA PANS UP and we see the sky. A dark purple orb shines. It is Arret's moon.

KIRK

I have to remember that everything is reversed here, Karla Five.

KARLA FIVE

The sun will be up soon, and it will be dark again. Meanwhile, come into my son's laboratory. I have awakened him and he is already working on your problem.

INT. LABORATORY

Star maps fill the walls. They are in the same reverse colors we are now used to. There is a playpen in one corner of the room, where a small child is obviously being "babysat." His playpen is filled with toys, a plastic bottle of milk, and he is up on his feet, playing with a rattle attached to the side. There is also a man, in his fifties, wearing a lab smock and adjusting slides of star charts on the walls.

APRIL

With all respect, Karla Five, how could such a young woman as yourself have a son old enough to be accomplished in science?

KARLA FIVE

I'm surprised that a young man like you would ask such a question, Commodore. May I introduce my son, Karl Four.

The man in his fifties approaches.

KARL FOUR

My honor to meet you, gentlemen.

SPOCK

Most logical. If the flow of time is reversed, then one is born at an old age, and dies in infancy. Your descendants are born before you and your ancestors are born after you.

KIRK

Then the young child in the playpen...

ANGLE ON CHILD

KARLA FIVE

My father, Captain. He has led a long, healthy life. He, too, was accomplished in science. His knowledge is gone now.

KIRK

You mean he no longer has it...

KARLA FIVE

I mean our society no longer has it. As our race evolves, all knowledge is lost...It is the natural order of things.

MED. SHOT - ALL

SPOCK

Fascinating...a race begins with all knowledge it will have, and as it progresses, knowledge is lost...

KIRK

We could remain forever awed with the differences between our universes, Karla Five, but we must discover a way to return to our positive matter universe.

KARL FOUR

Exactly the problem I have been working on since Karla informed me of your troubles, Captain Kirk.

EXT. SPACE - ENTERPRISE - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

In standard reverse orbit around Arret, the black, purple and blue stars shining in the white void.

INT. LABORATORY - STAR MAP

What we see: a gigantic hologram-map of this galaxy. It is a 3D representation of planets, stars, asteroids. We look at this living map while we hear voices:

KARL FOUR'S VOICE

This is a map of our galaxy. Our home solar system is here...

One of the black stars lights up bright red.

KARL FOUR'S VOICE

You entered our universe through the Amphion nova, here.

Another of the stars, some distance away, lights up bright red. As they continue to talk, we pull back and see a small console on the floor of the laboratory. Behind the console stand the tiny figures of Kirk, Spock and April, Karla Five and Karl Four. We now have a better idea of how large this star map is.

KIRK

We need to coordinate this to our own universe...can we do that, Spock?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

SPOCK

Yes, Captain. Apparently the two universes occupy the same space, but in different dimensions.

I have beamed down star maps of the Milky Way from the Enterprise library.

APRIL

(almost a question)

Assuming Beta Niobe and Amphion occupy the same space, we can determine if there are any other novae occupying the same space in both universes.

SPOCK

Correct, Commodore. Now if you will watch the star map, you will see the Milky Way.

We move in until we see just the star map again. It suddenly changes to a black map with white stars shining.

SPOCK'S VOICE

Here is Beta Niobe.

One of the white stars turns red.

SPOCK

And here is Earth...

Another white hole, some distance away, turns red.

SPOCK'S VOICE

It corresponds exactly with Arret. We can now determine the position of the galaxy. By superimposing both star maps, we will see where two stars occupy the same place in both universes.

The black map turns to grey as both maps appear. There are about 25 red dots showing.

SPOCK'S VOICE

The red spheres indicate where two stars are in the same space. No pair are novae in both universes. We would have to wait until one of the corresponding stars in either universe went nova...a wait of about 350 years.

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TWO SHOT - KIRK AND SPOCK

KIRK
We don't have 350 years...we'll
have returned to infancy and been
long gone by then.

SPOCK
Correct, Captain.

WIDEN TO INCLUDE APRIL

APRIL
If stars begin as dead stars here,
then we could bring one to life,
prematurely.

KIRK
Yes, we could act as a midwife,
giving birth to a star. Then we
would have two novas in the same
position...and theoretically return
home.

MED. SHOT - ALL

KARLA FIVE
But I had to pass through the novas
at my ship's top speed to avoid burning
up. Your ship isn't capable of such a
speed.

SPOCK
That's true, Captain.

KARLA FIVE
You are welcome to use my ship, Captain.

KIRK
I have a crew of 430, Karla Five. Your
ship is suitable for only a few people.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

SPOCK

We can't use her ship to transport us, Captain, but we could use it as an unmanned ship with our tractor beam attached.

APRIL

It could work. That's how we arrived here in the first place.

KIRK

It should work, yes. But any miscalculation anywhere along the way -- and we'll be plunging tail first into a supernova.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE - USS ENTERPRISE - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

The Enterprise moving through a field of black stars.

KIRK'S VOICE

Captain's Log, Stardate 6770.1...
time continues to flow backward for
us. We have set course for a dead
star in this anti-matter universe
that corresponds with the nova Minara
in ours. We are being pulled by Karla
Five's unmanned vessel, which is equipped
with enough positive matter armament to
ignite the dead star into life, hopefully
creating another passageway between the
positive and negative universes.

INT. BRIDGE - FULL SHOT

At their stations: Kirk, Spock, Uhura, Arex, Sulu. Robert April
is also on the bridge. All should look just a touch younger than
when we last saw them -- a wrinkle or two missing, a patch of
brown in April's hair.

KIRK

We just might get you to Babel after
all, Commodore.

APRIL

I'll be glad to get home...but
not necessarily to Babel. It only
means the end of my career, Jim.

EMPHASIZING SPOCK

SPOCK

I have a visual display of the
dead star that is our target on the
screen, Captain.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN

Very hard to see -- a white hold in white space.

SPOCK

Just as we have black holes in our
universe -- dead stars which have gone
nova and have been extinguished -- so
this universe has white holes. But here,
they are stars waiting to be born.

ANGLE ON UHURA

UHURA

Message coming in from Arret,
Captain. Karla Five is making
visual contact.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN

Karla Five in her son's laboratory.

KARLA FIVE

(filtered)

I want to wish you luck, Captain.
Whether you succeed or fail, the
outcome will remain unknown to me.

KIRK

Yes, Karla Five. We'll burn to a
crisp or escape into our own universe.
Either way, you'll never hear from us
again. Thank you for the sacrifice of
your vessel.

KARLA FIVE

(filtered)

It is a small sacrifice, Captain
Kirk. Success.

TWO SHOT - SULU AND AREX - NAVIGATION CONSOLE

SULU

Tractor beam working properly,
Captain.

AREX

We're meeting the speed of Karla
Five's unmanned vessel, Captain.

ANGLE ON ELEVATOR DOORS - MCCOY AND SARAH APRIL

McCoy and Sarah enter the bridge. The lines are gone from McCoy's
face, he is visibly younger. Sarah's hair is completely blonde,
and she too is much younger. Other crew personnel on the bridge are
also showing marked change now.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

Kirk now appears to be in his twenties. The others show the same relative age loss. Sulu and Uhura look like teenagers. Arax--well, with Arax it's hard to tell. Spock shows the least amount of change, as Vulcans age slower than humans.

MED. SHOT - BRIDGE

KIRK

How much time before the youngest crew member returns to the time of birth?

SPOCK

Eighteen minutes, 37 seconds in "real time", but long before that we shall all be children.

KIRK

He thinks about that.

SPOCK

SPOCK

And Captain, that also means we are losing our knowledge at an alarming rate. It is possible we will soon be unable to operate the Enterprise.

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CONTINUED:

KIRK

How is our course, Mr. Sulu?

He is very young now, about 16 years old, and he is puzzled, unsure what to do. The controls in front of him are unknown entities.

SULU

I don't know-- what am I doing here?
What is all this equipment?

SPOCK

He is too young, Captain. Younger than when he entered Star Fleet. He no longer knows how to operate the Enterprise.

KIRK

Mr. Arex, take over for him. I want a full status report. Lt. Uhura, report to navigation console.

Uhura's hair is in braids, as she used to wear in in the United States of Africa.

UHURA

I'm sorry, sir -- I don't understand all this equipment -- what do I do with these controls?

INTERCUT KIRK AND SPOCK

KIRK

Never mind. Spock, can you fill in for Sulu and Uhura?

SPOCK

Yes, Captain, but who will fill in for you?

KIRK

What do you mean?

SPOCK

At what age did you become a starship captain? And when did you enter Star Fleet Academy?

CONTINU

CONTINUED:

KIRK

I see what you mean...we're losing control fast, Mr. Spock. By the time we reach the white hole in space, we're not going to know what to do.

SPOCK

As a Vulcan, I age the slowest. I will be capable of assuming command longer than anyone else. But even I will become too young to know what to do...

EXT. SPACE - USS ENTERPRISE - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

Flying at top speed -- in reverse -- toward the white hole in space.

KIRK'S VOICE

Captain's log, supplemental. We have eleven minutes of real time left to reach the dead star, but all around my crew are turning into children, unable to operate the ship.

INT. BRIDGE - FULL SHOT

The CAMERA PANS the bridge. Kirk is a teenager, Spock is showing signs of de-aging, Uhura and Sulu and children. Arex is becoming more cuddly.

FAVORING SPOCK AND KIRK

SPOCK

Ten minutes, 14.21 seconds, Captain. We will just make it, according to computer projection. We will need to disconnect the tractor beam at the appropriate time.

KIRK

Tractor beam? How do we do that, Spock?

SPOCK

Captain, I must assume command. You are no longer able to command the Enterprise.

KIRK

Whatever you say...what shall I do?

ANGLE ON APRIL

He is virtually a new man. In his thirties, he has regained his stature -- broad shoulders, brown hair, handsome as he once was.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED:

APRIL

Mr. Spock, as long as I am aboard, I am senior officer. I hate to pull rank, but you will be capable of command only for a few minutes... not long enough to complete the maneuvers necessary to take us home.

SPOCK

You are correct, of course. Commodore April, command is yours.

APRIL

Commodore? I'm Captain April, Mr. Spock.

Spock has now reached teenage.

TWO SHOT - SARAH AND ROBERT APRIL

SARAH

Robert -- we're the only adults on the bridge -- they're all teenagers and children.

APRIL

Make sure no harm comes to them, Sarah. We have to ignite that dead star if we're going home. Mr. Spock, you are still capable of following orders?

SPOCK

Yes, Captain.

APRIL

Very good. Assume your post at the navigation console.

MED. SHOT - BRIDGE - SPOCK AND APRIL

A young teenage Spock takes his post. April in command chair.

SPOCK

The dead star is directly ahead, Captain, 12 degrees south of galactic plane.

APRIL

Arm Karla Five's vessel, Spock.

SPOCK

Vessel armed, Captain. Nine seconds to impact. Eight...seven...

EXT. SPACE - TWO VESSELS - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

Karla's smaller vessel flying tail first toward an outline of a dead, white star. The Enterprise flying tail first behind it.

INT. BRIDGE - EMPHASIZING SPOCK

SPOCK

Three...two...

EXT. SPACE - KARLA'S VESSEL - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

Karla's vessel impacts with the white star and there is an explosion of blackness. The screen is filled with flames of blue, deep purple and black.

INT. BRIDGE - ANGLE ON APRIL AND SPOCK

Sitting at the navigation console is a 7-year-old Spock, much like we saw him in "Yesteryear." The rest of the bridge crew are small children and infants, with Sarah standing by.

CLOSE-UP - APRIL

He is determined -- he is also revelling in the joy of being in the command chair where he belongs.

APRIL

Hang on -- we're going right into the heart of the nova.

April moves to the navigation panel and operates it himself. He pushes several buttons quickly.

EXT. SPACE - NEW STAR - NEGATIVE UNIVERSE

The exploding black star fills almost the entire screen. The Enterprise is a small object in the middle of the screen, flying tail first into the heart of the dark nova.

The Enterprise becomes a speck in the center of the nova, then disappears into blackness.

EXT. SPACE - GATEWAY

The Enterprise, surrounded by multi-colored explosions. It is moving very fast. The explosions grow and blot out the image of the Enterprise. The entire screen is filled with reds, oranges, yellows and whites.

The CAMERA PULLS BACK and out of the center of this reddish-orange mass comes the Enterprise, zooming toward us, saucer first. The surrounding area of space is black, and the white stars are shining. They're home.

INT. BRIDGE - FULL SHOT

April in command chair, Sarah by his side. Infants everywhere, with 7-year-old Spock.

ANGLE ON VIEWSCREEN

What they see: the universe the way its supposed to look. White stars shining in the black void, rushing toward them as the Enterprise moves through space.

EMPHASIZING SARAH AND ROBERT APRIL

He's standing up, she is next to him.

APRIL

We did it! We're home again!

He turns, and sees for the first time his young, beautiful wife, as he knew her long ago. For a moment, the two just stare at each other, to make sure what they're seeing is real. As always, he speaks business first. But he is tender, soft.

APRIL

We're alright...we're home. The reverse aging process has stopped.

SARAH

But the Enterprise crew...they're all children.

APRIL

They can enter the transporter. It retains a memory of their original molecular structure.

SARAH

What about us?

(a beat)

We don't have to use the transporter. We can remain young, live our lives over again...you could command a starship once more...

APRIL

What a blessing to be able to live one's life over again. *

He looks at Sarah.

APRIL

If the life you've led has left you unfulfilled. *
No, Sarah, I don't want to live it all over again;
I couldn't improve one bit on what we've had together.

SARAH

Oh, Robert...

The two young lovers embrace.

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DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. SPACE - USS ENTERPRISE - POSITIVE UNIVERSE

Flying front first, through the black void of space.

INT. BRIDGE - FULL SHOT - LATER

The Enterprise crew have returned to their proper ages. All are in their proper posts: Kirk, Spock, Uhura, Sulu and Arex. Sarah and Robert April are once more visitors to the bridge.

KIRK

The Minara nova is not far from Babel, Commodore. We'll be there shortly.

EMPHASIZING APRIL

APRIL

I know that should make me happy, Jim, but it does not.

KIRK

We've received a message from the Federation that might bring you some cheer. Lt. Uhura, would you relay it to Commodore April and his wife?

ANGLE ON UHURA

She holds one hand to the listening device in her ear, repeating for Robert and Sarah's benefit.

UHURA

In view of Commodore April's heroic actions aboard the USS Enterprise this stardate, we are reviewing his mandatory retirement, and will consider his appeal to remain Federation Ambassador-at-large. We request his presence on Babel to begin hearings.

ANGLE ON SARAH AND ROBERT APRIL

They smile at each other. He reaches for her hand.

EMPHASIZING APRIL

APRIL

Well, good. Maybe I can even talk them into doing away with that silly mandatory retirement. Just because someone is 75 years old doesn't mean they're ready to stop giving service to the galaxy!

CONTINUED