

Women at Warp Episode 69: “Bonk! Bonk! A Rewriting of Miri”

Jarrah: Hi and welcome to Women at Warp, a Roddenberry Star Trek podcast. Join us as our crew of four women Star Trek fans boldly go on our bi-weekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name's Jarrah and thanks for tuning in. Today with us we have crew members Andi;

Andi: Hey everyone!

Jarrah: And Sue;

Sue. Hi everybody!

Jarrah: And before we get into our main topic, which is one that's a suggestion of various listeners, we just need to remind you about the Women at Warp Patreon, which is how we support our show through donations from amazing listeners like you, it helps us keep the show up and running and helps us get out to conventions to promote the show and do other things like that and in exchange you get access to exclusive bonus content. So if you're able to pledge even a small monthly donation you can head over to patreon.com/womenatwarp, and thank you for your support. We also wanted to remind you that another way you can support our show is to leave us a rating and review on Apple podcasts or wherever else you listen to your podcasts. It helps other people find us and let us know what you're thinking about our show so thanks so much for doing that. Now onto our main topic. We've had a few listeners suggest that we sort of tackle rewriting, in a way, a sexist episode or a problematic episode of Star Trek. So basically like, if you were going to do that concept how would you have done it better, because we do a lot of, you know critical analysis of the shows but what could have made this an awesome episode. And so we had to pick an episode that was salvageable. So I would argue Wolf in the Fold may be a lost cause or maybe you know Favorite Son from Voyager. Maybe not really possible to rewrite it to be awesome although if you have ideas for that write us an email at crew@womenatwarp.com and we'd be happy to hear them. So we picked one that was, I think could be better, which is the original series episode Miri.

Sue: So in talking about the original series we know we're going to run into issues of, well that would never happen on 60s TV. And I think that at least in my mind I'm thinking about if we were to do this story or see this story now how I would want it to be different.

Andi: Interesting. I mean I think all my suggestions you could have done on 60s TV, so.

Sue: So I'm just thinking we did back home we did our gender swapped or gender bent TOS crew we got a couple comments of well that would never happen on 60s TV.

Andi: You mean on 60's TV they wouldn't do a crew of five women of color kicking ass?

Jarrah: Right? I would like to point that out that we know. We know/ Because they may-

Andi: It's a thought experiment!

Jarrah: Yeah. I mean I think that we don't want to restrict ourselves too much. We want to stick to the concept because otherwise we're just inventing a new episode, but I think that we should be a little bit flexible and have a bit of fun with it. So-

Sue: Exactly.

Jarrah: You know, lets not hamstring ourselves to the period but we could discuss like what would have been possible and what might have been more of like you know 201'0s fantasy.

Andi: So first thing I would change is the title of the episode I would change it to be Bonk! Bonk!

Jarrah: Yup. I mean just generally I will say about this episode but it does a way better job of showing children as truly terrifying than And the Children Shall Lead.

Sue: See I get really frustrated with this episode and how they're portraying children because like these aren't five year olds but they're writing them like they're like infants on the Flintstones. Children are more intelligent than that.

Jarrah: Yeah. I mean so what did you... I had the same thought. Did you also Andi about like this? The theory they're operating on is like if you leave children alone and their bodies stay the same for like a hundred years their minds will also stay the same because no adults are around to tell them differently.

Andi: Yeah. No.

Jarrah: And I don't 100% believe that especially because some of them are like 12 or 13.

Sue: Right. They're they're young teenagers they're prepubescent like very explicitly. We were having more intelligent conversations than like, teacher get bonk bonk at 13. C'mon!

Andi: I mean I think it was kind of supposed to be a like Lord of the Flies type thing where like their society broke down and so they kind of went feral but it did not ring true to me, no. If you're asking me if the children seemed realistic the answer is no.

Sue: But also Miri didn't speak that way.

Jarrah: And so like how old did you think Miri was supposed to be? We're we're not really rewriting right this minute but I'm I'm just kind of curious.

Andi: Like 14 maybe?

Jarrah: Yeah. The actress was actually 19 it looks like.

Andi: That makes me feel a little better.

Jarrah: So, but before we get too far into this we should probably summarize this episode for anyone who doesn't remember Miri.

Andi: Are you serious? No one remembers Bonk! Bonk!

Jarrah: Bonk! Bonk! I'm just calling it that from now on that's the best suggestion ever. Yeah, anyone want to take a stab at that? Andi?

Andi: Sure. So the crew and some randoms they transport to Earth 2 apparently, and it's all like abandoned and everything, and then there is a guy who looks like he has leprosy jumps out because they touched his tricycle.

Sue: Wow.

Andi: That's my favorite part by the way. And it turns out that on the planet all of the adults like had contracted this disease that killed them but also made them angry and mean. And so nothing is left but children, and they do a little science-ing and find out that as the children age very, very, very, slowly once they hit puberty they get the disease and then they start to die. And then the crew starts to get the disease and they get some pretty

cool purple lesions on their body, and then they do some science-ing and fix it all and there's some bonk bonking, yeah.

Jarrah: Footnote, we will definitely be Sue's science-ing corner in this episode. And so I was I was watching this like every 10 minutes I'd be like oh god Sue's science corner needs to address this.

Sue: Oh boy.

Andi: Yeah, and the main character whose name is Miri, whose name was the title of the episode until we changed it, it's now Bonk! Bonk!

Sue: "A pretty name for a pretty young woman."

Andi: Yeah exactly.

Jarrah: So creepy.

Andi: And she is turning into an adult, and so she gets lesions and I guess that's why we have to save them? Anyways. I kind of like parts of this episod but other parts are like what are you doing?

Jarrah: Yeah, it has some moments and so it's not like my least favorite but it's got some weirdness too. Also apparently in the original script there was a character referred to as fat little boy in the script. So great. And so was great but we don't we already you don't have to rewrite that because tha got written out.

Andi: Good for them.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Sue: So this episode has my earliest Star Trek memory.

Jarrah: What is that?

Sue: Like before I even remember watching TNG years ago, I remember being I don't know how old, like three maybe and seeing Rand trying to get Kirk's attention. That whole scene of like I always try and get you to look at my legs look at my legs now, Captain. That is my very first Star Trek memory.

Andi: That's hilariously random.

Sue: Right? I don't I don't even know why, but like that has stuck with me for 30+ years.

Andi: That's awesome. Way to go Miri! So right off the bat I want to say that the first thing I would change is, why does this have to be an Earth 2? It doesn't make any sense that we would find Earth, another Earth somewhere out here. It makes no sense.

Jarrah: And they never explain that do they?

Andi: Yeah, no they never explain it. It doesn't change anything about the actual episode., it just gives you a kind of like mysterious feeling right upfront like "oh look it's another Earth that's kind of weird", but that can be achieved by a lot of things and it's not like we need to have it look, and like they even have the same continents I was like Hey Michigan, that's where I live! You know it doesn't make any sense, and they could have just gotten rid of that, and then you wouldn't have to sit there and go wait, what? Why is there an exact replica of Earth, 60's Earth in the middle of space. That makes no sense.

Sue: Low budgets?

Andi: Yeah but they don't actually have to say it's earth. How many times do we go to planets and they look like 60's Earth, but nobody says anything.

Sue: It's true. And really if they had just turned the image of the Earth upside down nobody would have recognized it anyway.

Jarrah: They also could have gone with it like it's a terra formed colony of like isolationists.

Andi: Yeah. Literally anything would have made more sense.

Jarrah: If they need to be drawn to the planet, like that's the hook that they have in the first little, you know the teaser before the credits is like oh gosh it's Earth. They could have been like we're here to check up on this terraformed colony because no one's heard from them in a while or something.

Andi: Yeah.

Jarrah: Like the kids also didn't necessarily have to be 100 years old so they could have it could have been like no one's heard from them in 20 years.

Andi: Yeah it just was a weird detail to me that they never actually explain or follow up on, so why put it in there. So there's my first change for you all.

Jarrah: All right, so but what do we change it to?

Andi: I think your idea was good.

Jarrah: All right. It's a terraformed colony that they haven't heard from in a while

Andi: Yup.

Jarrah: Unspecified amount of time. They can specify later. So that's the teaser. The other thing they could have done was just it's an alien planet and we're going to paint the sky a different color. That always seems to work.

Andi: It's cool looking. I dig it.

Sue: Well it seems to happen.

Jarrah: They need a reason to be there though so.

Andi: Well they have a distress signal.

Jarrah: Oh right. Yeah. Yeah. That's smart. Okay. So distress signal from a planet that is either an alien planet with a weird sky color to make it look alien or a terraformed colony of people who really like the 60s.

Andi: Yeah totally.

Jarrah: It was like industrial space hippies.

Andi: I will say though, okay, as much as I think it's silly that they made the point of pointing out that it was like Earth 2, the actual set was pretty cool. I thought it looked very eerie and very interesting, and I dug their set like yeah it looked awesome. That's one of my favorite things about the episode is how creepy it was.

Jarrah: Yeah. This is also the only episode where Janice goes on an away mission.

Andi: Yes, and sadly that is the second thing I change.

Jarrah: Yes. I was going to say which, possibly the same thing. Wait you wouldn't send her or you'd have it go differently at the beginning?

Andi: I wouldn't send her. I don't understand why she's there. She's a yeoman or whatever she brings Kirk soup.

Jarrah: Yes.

Andi: I would send Chapel. I would send Chapel and Uhura. That's the first change I would make. Uhura's their communications person and Chapel's their nurse. Like she doesn't have to be down there at first but she could transport down as soon as they figure out what they're dealing with.

Sue: For as many times as they're beaming down to make first contact Uhura is certainly not on enough landing parties.

Andi: Exactly! But instead they bring Rand and obviously the only reason that they brought Rand is so she could be-

Sue: Weirdly jealous?

Andi: A point of jealousy for Miri. Yes. And so she could be a damsel. There's no actual story reason for her to be there. And as much as I love Rand and I'd love to see her in more episodes and I really hate taking her out of this one, it doesn't make sense she's in the landing party.

Jarrah: Yeah. Although I mean we see yeoman in other episodes be in the landing party and kick ass like I'm thinking of Martha Leighton and "The Apple" where like clearly they have to have Starfleet training. I mean to be, it does. You're right. Like there isn't a super, given the lack of function we see for her on the ship which we talked about in our Rand episode "Beehive of Power" that you're right that she doesn't seem to have a good reason to be on the away team but maybe like the yeoman also are like bonus security staff.

Andi: I would be totally down for that, but, easier to me is probably just putting Chapel in there instead.

Jarrah: Yeah I think that's a good point I didn't consider that. I was just going to say that my thought was like the very first things so they get down there and like you said the old dude attacks them to get to his tricycle. And Janice holds McCoy and cowers behind him.

Andi: Yeah.

Jarrah: And so my first change was gonna be Janice Rand is the one who knocks him out. Yeah. Martha Leighton is like kicking guys in the face in "The Apple." So I think that's a possibility but I kind of like the possibilities that your ideal is better

Sue: And then Chapel can be the one who knocks him out.

Andi: Yeah, or Uhura.

Jarrah: Or she can like to stick him with an injection of something that makes him, like sedates him but that isn't supposed to kill him but then he dies.

Andi: Because the other members of the landing party are just two random red shirts and then our boys; Kirk, Spock and McCoy, so there's no reason at all that we can- actually let's bring them all, let's just bring Rand, Chapel and Uhura with us and then that'll be that. We'll let Rand karate chops this guy this leper in the face.

Jarrah: Because like Kirk punches them like three times while the red shirts just kind of stand there with their phasers out there like the they're the type of security guys that are more about watching than doing.

Sue: See I wonder if like the chief of security on the Enterprise is like look you're going down on a landing party with Kirk and just let him beat the guys up. Just don't worry about it. He'll get upset if you don't.

Jarrah: He's one of those guys who like his ego, he just can't deal with it if he's not the one to punch him personally.

Sue: Can you totally see that though?

Andi: Okay, I will say though that there's also this first scene something I would never give up in a million years. And it's McCoy looking seriously at the tricycle.

Jarrah: I love how long that shot is like take all it's like two of them pick up the tricycle and examine it like yeah.

Andi: Everything about this heavy handed metaphor is amazing. Okay, I love it. The way he gently cradles it and then like puts it back while looking at it and the broken wheel just kind of spinning it's amazing the whole thing is amazing. We have to keep that. We must.

Jarrah: Sure.

Andi: I also dig the Leper and his dirty makeup. But why? I mean why would he care about this tricycle if he was like 14 or whatever.

Jarrah: Exactly.

Andi: I love it. I love everything about it. Keep it. It makes me laugh. As you might be able to tell.

Jarrah: Yeah. That makes sense. All right. So then they go into this old house and they find Miri and I think we all have stuff to change about this scene.

Andi: Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah and you know I have a lot of, I was like trying to mull over ideas, like did I want Miri, like would I switch genders for John who's like the leader of the the lost boys-y, Lord of the Flies-y gang of kids versus Miri. I don't know that it necessarily matters but I think that like unfortunately we kind of go down the path with Miri not being super interesting very early on.

Andi: First thing I would change is she'd be the leader. Second thing I'd change is she wouldn't be crying.

Jarrah: Yep. The third thing I'd change is that she wouldn't just be like suddenly switch from being like terrified to whatever like puppy dog by Kirk telling her she's pretty and being kind of creepy.

Sue: And see that is what I would change because she starts talking to them before he ever gives her that "compliment" and there are so many things that you can say to compliment a woman/girl that aren't pretty. Like

she's brave, she's courageous, she's a good leader, she's clearly smart. There are so many other things that you can say in that conversation other than, oh but you're so pretty.

Jarrah: Exactly. And then it's additionally creepy because it's like a pretty name for a pretty young woman. And she's like, pretty? Very pretty. And you're just like, Kirk it's super creepy.

Sue: Kirk keeps talking about how she's becoming a woman.

Jarrah: Yeah that is gross.

Sue: You're becoming a woman you're a lovely young- It's so gross.

Jarrah: Also now we have Rand, Uhura and Chapel there so there's more people who could be involved in this conversation in different ways.

Andi: Yeah. See the way I would like to see it is Miri is in charge and instead of them wandering in on her crying, she is by herself because she just found her first leprosy spot and she realizes that she's sick and she's trying to figure out how to save herself, like I would like her to just be more proactive. And then she meets these adults and she's like you're the first grups. We can keep grups, I'm fine with it. Yeah. Here are the first grups that aren't completely mental that I've seen in however many years because we did decide that it didn't necessarily need to be 300 years later or whatever. Maybe they can help me, and like have her have an intelligent conversation to them about what's going on and she can still be scared. I would be scared, but I just don't need her to be like,

Sue: Weepy.

Andi: A wilting flower. Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah. And she still doesn't know exactly what's going on because she would have been a baby when, or like you know when the grups were attacking people and going crazy and like trying to develop this research like she wouldn't have known. They don't know the nature of the illness but she could still more clearly explain like people got sick and they were, you know, they hurt people and this might happen to you like she could still build suspense that way without having to give them all the information. And then actually you know maybe part of her thing, I mean she sort of does this but she could be sort of like trying to hide the whereabouts of the other kids from them? Like maybe she doesn't totally trust them, and so she's like, and she knows the other kids won't trust them so maybe she could be still like preventing them from their objectives somehow?

Andi: Yeah. I just see her, like I think it would be better if instead of damseling, she was a leader/envoy.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Andi: For the lost boys.

Jarrah: Yeah. And maybe she secretly has a crush on Uhura. Because who wouldn't.

Andi: I'd love that if instead of staring at Kirk she was like Uhura, holy. Like that's what I would do to be honest. Anyways I guess that's the thing though is like right off the bat do you want to change the fact that the markers for her adulthood are her sexuality. Because that's the underlying like message of Miri is that like becoming an adult equals having like romantic or sexual feelings which weirds me out.

Jarrah: Yeah. I mean I would be okay with it if it was in addition to her like intelligence and grasp of the reality of the situation. Like if the other kids were more able to like continue to live in this sort of Peter Pan fantasy, but she was like really realizing this was like, shit was about to go down like you were saying like realizing she was

getting sick and stuff. I would be more OK with it if it was like just a thing that was happening in addition to that and not like the central reason they all know she's becoming a woman.

Sue: Right. It's a very linked to puberty, the whole thing. So and especially, now I'm doing it, for the time it was made. Right, that's how even even into like probably now how puberty is explained to children, right?. You're going to start having sexual feelings.

Jarrah: They should totally show her getting her period.

Andi: Yeah, they would not do that.

Sue: Yeah that'll happen.

Jarrah: And like Janice Rand just like pulls the tampon out of her beehive man. She's like it's not just for coffee.

Sue: They'd have to use blue liquid because you know you can't show blood on TV.

Jarrah: Clearly that is not 60's appropriate television that I just imagined, but. So yes, you know, going back to more 60's approved television, it, yeah. I mean it is it's definitely creepy because they keep referring to like to, you know, she's becoming a young woman. She clearly- she loves you kind of thing.

Sue: She's sexually mature now so this is totally not creepy

Jarrah: And it does not matter to me that she's like supposedly over 100 when they make those jokes and like stuff like that because she is for like under the premise of the episode of the original episode not our rewrite. Clearly not mentally that age. She is very clearly like in puppy love with Kirk and not able to exercise any kind of sexual romantic agency. So that does not matter to me, it's still creepy.

Andi: You know one thing I want to change though is the character design. First of all she's rocking a cool dress but more importantly when Lost Boys is wearing like a Groucho Marx mask. That's like half cut off, and that's amazing, and we need to keep that.

Jarrah: And another one is wearing like a Hawaiian shirt just like buttoned at the navel.

Andi: Ah, I love it.

Jarrah: Like he's like the studliest kid in this group. He's just like look at me, I'm basically on Hawaii Five-O. I also I mean I think that Kim Darby who plays Miri is a really excellent actress. Like she was-

Ando: Yes she was really good.

Jarrah: She's compelling in this role so she can keep her role we're just going to make her a better role. So yeah. Oh yeah, because then ok. Because this scene continues with he doesn't just say she's pretty but then like she tells him her name like and he says his name's Jim and she's like, I like that name. Good. I like yours too. I like you. Do you really? I wouldn't lie to you. I wouldn't lie to you either Jim. Like he clearly knows that he's like using her crush on him to get her to trust him and like sort of like leading her on in a way it's pretty creepy.

Andi: Super creep- super creepy.

Sue: I mean he does this all the time, but as far as he knows at this point she's like 14.

Jarrah: Yeah. So like that's pretty gross. But I mean I think we sort of said that we were hoping she would be able to have more rational conversations so hopefully she realizes she's getting sick and they get her to trust them by talking about the illness and how like they can help.

Andi: I don't mind so much that she has a crush on Kirk, I mind a lot that he seems to be fueling it.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Andi: That is gross.

Jarrah: Yeah. What could he do differently without alienating her?

Andi: Talk to her like a human?

Jarrah: Yeah yeah. Just pretend that it's not happening kind of like an carry on the conversation instead of like I like you.

Andi: You're so pretty. And he also like at one point he was sort of like tilts her head up and-

Jarrah: Oh that is super gross.

Andi: That is just like a really intimate gesture to me. Yeah.

Sue: And we could also have Rand not reacting the way that she is.

Jarrah: Yes.

Andi: Yeah.

Jarrah: Which doesn't start yet. But yeah, and I mean that other thing we could do since Uhura is here now is like maybe Uhura at this point is like off with Spock or Rand or someone like investigating the communication signal because they just kind of like write that off too, they're like we found the building where the signal is but maybe they could actually investigate it. And like tell us something interesting about it.

Sue: And I think Chapel would be a great choice to be talking to Miri at this point.

Jarrah: Yeah, yeah I like that.

Andi: Just make it less between Miri and Kirk and more like Miri and other adults and just include them in that conversation, so it's more of a group conversation than one on one.

Jarrah: So are we good with this point we can go to the next scene?

Andi: Yeah. Which is what. The "nyah nyah nyah nyah" stuff?

Jarrah: No they're in the lab next. So Miri takes them to the lab after she's like no, that's a bad place that's where bad things happened- at the lab. And that's where they're also like "We also found the transmitter! Anyway." So maybe you know at this point they meet back up with Uhura and stuff we say like we found the transmitter. And you know it was it's been active for like 30 years or something like that or maybe Miri figured out how to activate it or I don't know something was-

Andi: I think it would be a good opportunity for some exposition that doesn't all come from Miri. So if you split some of the exposition between that and like the distress signal maybe the distress signal could have more information from the adults before they all died.

Jarrah: Yes. That would make sense. So I'm just going to read the next line and I'm going to ask first for a Sue's Science Corner opinion on this.

Sue: Oh no.

Jarrah: So the next line is McCoy examining the blotches- "A veritable zoo of bacteria, beam down a bio-computer and portable electronic microscope, if I'm dealing with viruses I'll need better equipment than I have here." I mean at this point I can cut a little bit of slack, because, so they're using this like old timey microscope and I think what he's trying to say is I can't see viruses, but there might be viruses. But he does see bacteria and the two can co-exist.

Sue: Yes.

Jarrah: But later on it gets worse. But I feel like that's the first point where that, starts, the narrative starts to crack like where they just start to be making stuff up and then it gets worse.

Sue: Yeah. So bacteria and viruses not the same. And a huge problem in our current you know medical treatment is that people go after antibiotics when they have a virus and thus creating superbugs and lowering our resistance et cetera et cetera. So not the same definitely not great. I don't yeah I am, this is not my field. So I don't want to expound too much on it. But I don't know a lot of the times it feels like they just grabbed science-y, medical sounding words and just put them together.

Jarrah: Yeah like I feel like it would be, it would have been better if something like maybe McCoy had talked about like I can see decay or I can see like some sort of degradation of the tissue, but I can't tell what's at work here and I'll need better equipment like maybe that would have been made a bit more sense just given where things are going, because we later learn that this is like basically engineered viruses that are supposed to sustain life. So if they had like engineered viruses that had begun, I don't know somehow how sustained it made life longer, but then when you hit puberty you all, you got super sick are going to die you would have observed like the effects but not the cause.

Sue: Yeah. Right. And it's just if it was genetic modification then I don't think that it would make sense for it to be either a bacteria or a virus. If they're saying it is based on the modifications that they were making it would just happen. Or maybe it's cause- but no that wouldn't make sense because the landing party gets the lesions right. Yeah.

Jarrah: So yes so it can't just be genetic like it has to be transmittable.

Sue: I think they should have stuck with just something like a pathogen. Instead of trying to narrow it down and mix stuff up, but I mean Star Trek does that all the time and changes galaxy and universe a lot which drives me up the wall. But I did think it was interesting that McCoy says electronic microscope. The electron microscope was created in the 1930's so that technology did exist. And I wonder, I just don't know if it was called an electronic microscope before then or if they just like meant one he has to plug it into a wall.

Jarrah: Yeah. Also if they don't- did they have electricity? I guess so.

I mean. Okay, well I mean I guess he would have had batteries or something like it where they wouldn't have had to actually-

Sue: Power is not an issue for the landing party.

Jarrah: He wasn't like send me a 1960's era microscope that plugs in please, but I think it just meant like because the one he's using doesn't even have an electric light in it. It just it's relying on a mirror I think.

Sue: Right. But if he's saying he wants to see viruses I'm assuming that they meant an electron microscope.

Jarrah: That's true.

Sue: Rather than one that has an electric light.

Jarrah: Well and then okay, so they hail the Enterprise and they get random like Lieutenant Farrell who's in charge of everything even though in the original Uhura wasn't anywhere and neither is Scotty. So let's get Lieutenant Farrell.

Sue: To be fair it's the eighth episode of the series.

Jarrah: Yes.

Sue: So they know those rules haven't really settled in the writers room yet.

Sue: Sure.

Andi: Maybe we take Uhura out of the landing party and put her in charge of the ship.

Jarrah: And then we could just have more cool stuff happening on the ship.

Andi: Because a lot of this middle part drags anyway.

Jarrah: Yeah I think we can probably make better use of Uhura on the ship. I don't think we've used her too much already except for she's investigating the communications thing so maybe-

Andi: And Spock can do that.

Jarrah: Yes Spock can do that. That works.

Andi: And I just really would love to see Uhura in charge of the ship. Acting Captain Uhura. Yes!

Jarrah: All right so at this point Kirk is like no one else is coming down from the ship and no one else is going up because we're quarantining ourselves. Fairly smart. Yeah. And then like also Spock isn't getting sick. Okay. Good point. And then they start reading stuff around the lab and they find that it is a genetics book called 'The Life Prolongation Project.' So that's that's what the bad thing was that went Bonk! Bonk!

Andi: See if if human beings could just stop trying to defeat death so much problems would be avoided. Haven't evil seen *Pet Cemetery*? It always goes wrong!

Jarrah: Yes. All right so they beam down the computer, et cetera, et cetera. So they're still in the lab but it's later. And this is when McCuay starts to describe the virus saying it's tubular and I don't think he means like the slang.

Sue: This is an awesome virus man, cowabunga.

Jarrah: It's tubular with extreme multiplicability an affinity for nucleic acids. So it's eating your DNA. Is that correct? / RNA.

Andi: Okay?

Jarrah: Maybe? I'll do better, its mating with it. I'm not sure what affinity means.

Andi: That's just like a word salad of science-y crap. So I mean okay.

Jarrah: And we scrapped the things so it's not 300 years ago now, but then they're like but it's because glands right? Yeah. It's totally because of glands.

Andi: I mean everything is because of glands, Jarrah!

Jarrah: Yeah, we learned that in the episode where Wesley and Geordi talk about sex. And this is the part where they are basically like kids are like wild animals and without adults they're just going to stay that way. But then they're like but Miri is not like that because she likes Jim. She's becoming a woman.

Andi: Oh gosh.

Jarrah: So what is our theory on these kids?

Andi: Okay this is another thing, I really wish they had either gone full *Children of the Corn* or full *Lost Boys* because they've got a weird mix here of like, they're kind of feral and creepy and like Malachi-ish and then, or they're like kind of cute and fun. And it's like a really weird amalgamation of those two things. It's like pick a genre guys, pick a genre.

Jarrah: Yeah I agree and I think that in the original there apparently was more emphasis on the older ones taking care of the younger ones and that could have been more interesting, although less creepy probably, but it would have been it would have made more sense to me how you could have reasoned with them because if-you know based on their premise, when Kirk does finally reason with them at the end of it I didn't like buy that they would have gone with that because they're basically at the point where they're just like beat him up beat him up, except for the bonk bonk, bonk bonk because it's more awesome. And they're like carrying like bowling pins and things like that and like beating him with them. And like I didn't buy that Kirk could have like fought them all off without hurting anyone. Unless they weren't very committed.

Andi: Yeah I think they could have kept some of the eerie, these kids are weird and creepy stuff at the very beginning, but then like when you actually meet them they're rational?

Jarrah: Yea like maybe they're just scared right? Like they're scared at the beginning, and so they're like doing this nyah nyah creepy chanting thing as partly like a way to like ward the adults off because they're freaked out.

Andi: Yeah like that scene where they throw rocks at Spock. Yeah that makes total sense. That is a rational thing to do. So like you could keep all of that and then like not have them be like weird feral kids who just wanna burn the world down.

Jarrah: Yeah and like also it pisses me off that they're able to kidnap and tie up Rand, but Kirk can basically just like shake them off like it's like an annoying dog that's chewing on the hem of his pants.

Andi: This is why Rands whole arc if you can even call it in this episode is so so annoying because she's so incompetent the whole time. And then like really children and they tied her to a chair barely she never even tried to escape. It's all very frustrating.

Jarrah: Yeah. Agreed. Well luckily our version won't have that problem.

Andi: No it won't.

Jarrah: So basically we can- I think we can dispense with most of this conversation in the lab maybe have them science slightly more believably and speculate maybe on the fact that like maybe Chapel can put in that she thinks the kids might be scared and the other ones are like kids are, McCoy could be like kids are basically animals. I still buy that he would basically say that.

Suei: Oh for sure.

Jarrah: McCoy could be super down on kids. Spock could be kind of down on kids. Maybe Chapel and Kirk are like the sort of you guys should give the benefit of the doubt. They're just children kind of speech or something.

Andi: Yeah. Okay. What is the theme of this episode?

Jarrah: Ummm...

Andi: This is where I'm running into trouble because when we're rewriting it what is our theme what are we saying?

Jarrah: That's a good question.

Andi: Childhood sucks childhood is awesome? It's definitely something to do with childhood.

Jarrah: Well I mean kids need adults but adults perpetuate mad science. Can we put a cat in this episode?

Andi: When Jarrah runs out of theme ideas, she just puts a cat on it. Just put a cat on it!

Jarrah: I think in the end instead of saying like they're beaming down teachers just like they're just beaming down cats.

Andi: Cats for everyone!

Jarrah: Cats and adults to make sure the cats are okay otherwise I'd worry.

Andi: Yeah. Okay, so maybe maybe we don't really have an answer for a theme but I will say that they didn't have to have Rand being kidnapped. They could just have the kids stealing the communicators. Really all you need is you need Miri and Kirk to end up with the kids, with the lost boy kids.

Jarrah: The only thing- the only reason they did that is like it was further- It was supposed to be further tension for Kirk because they're all starting to go slightly mad from the disease. And Kirk is like I need to find Janice rah rah rah, in addition to like I need to find the communicators. Although then he seems more lucid as soon as he starts talking to the kids so whatever. Go figure.

Andi: I don't even know if we need to have the kids steal the communicators. Why can't we just have Miri and Kirk going to them and them trying to convince them?

Jarrah: Well that's like a time thing right, but they could, I mean all of that is adjustable right, like they it's supposed to be that they need the computer from the ship without the computer, they don't know the vaccine's going to work. It could be, what does he call it, like a "vial of death" or something.

Andi: Yeah. We could just speed up the virus.

Jarrah: Yep. Yeah exactly.

Andi: Yeah instead of seven days. Which why are they just chilling on this for seven days like if you want to add tension just make it two days.

Jarrah: And also we could, well we could also have Uhura and team working on things on the ship.

Sue: Maybe it's more like five to seven days like the length of your first period.

Jarrah: Sure.

Andi: Bring it back to the period, always.

Jarrah: Well maybe, so maybe like Uhura and the people on the ship could be finding out where these kids came from because maybe there is like a serious issue communicating with them and maybe, okay, maybe they're worried about the timing but they're also worried that the kids won't all get vaccinated like that they won't all let them inject them because there's distrust so they need to like bridge a communication issue and maybe Uhura: and people are able to dig up information that can shed light on their background and help them to communicate.

Andi: Okay. I like that better than what we got. The other thing too is are these the only kids left or is this like a worldwide issue?

Jarrah: No I'm pretty sure it just affects New Michigan.

Andi: Oh that's a bummer.

Sue: Jarrah you just won the podcast.

Andi: Michigan 2.0. Yeah I mean we could just make more of a global problem which would give Uhura something to do.

Jarrah: Yeah, maybe they end up like disseminating the virus through the atmosphere or the vaccine through the atmosphere or something.

Andi: I mean it makes just as much sense as the science they did do.

Sue: I think it's a vaccine that means it had to have been a virus if they're using the language correctly which on TOS is a big if.

Jarrah: Okay so then where we're at in the episode is Miri and Kirk go to try to find the kids, but then they're startled by Louise who is another like puberty girl who is dying and jumps on Kirk's back and dies after he stuns her with a phaser.

Andi: I think all of that can stay the way she's holding on to him like a monkey and he's just like flailing, its gold man.

Jarrah: And also all the kids being afraid of them and stuff and like running away. That's fine.

Andi: And also she gives him an entry point with them like you want to end up with like Louise is like the fact that Miri recognizes her and I think that all that is good. It's good tension stuff so I think this is a scene that can stay. Plus who can get over her piggybacking on Kirk while he flails. That's amazing.

Jarrah: Yes. Let's cut the part where Kirk makes Miri sharpen pencils.

Andi: Yeah what was that like was he just giving her busy work to keep her from hitting on him?

Sue: We could totally use some more pencils.

Jarrah: And she's like 'are these enough?' And he's like 'I think we could use some more'. Yeah that's totally just busywork. I mean there's got to be something more important she could do. She's not you know she's not really dumb, she can go and be talking to the kids she can be trying to locate them. I don't know why they're so like they seem to be really worried that like I don't think they're worried Miri is going to run away and they seemed really worried for her safety because the other kids are feral, but I feel like they could trust her a bit more.

Andi: Yeah. Or maybe like instead of you know Rand and Miri just going for a walk to like occupy Miri, maybe Rand and Miri or Chapel and Miri could be going out, Chapel probably is useful doing medical research but like they could be going out trying to like figure out where the kids are hiding or something like trying to reason with John or something.

Sue: Something better than sharpening pencils, it's a low bar. But I think we can clear it.

Jarrah: So then they talk about the disease process and they find out that Spock is a carrier so he can't go, he can't go back to the ship. And there's that cute moment like and I do want to go back to the ship and then Kirk grins at him and you're like they belong together.

Andi: That's exactly what I thought too. I'm not even going to front they've made eyes at each other and I was just like Dreamweaver.

Jarrah: And then they talk about what the symptoms are going to be, intense fever great pain in the extremities and fuzziness of vision and then those are just the early symptoms. I feel like people should have the early symptoms already.

Andi: Yeah. Especially if we upped the timeline for the tension. That would also make McCoy's decision way more rational than it is and also makes sense why he panics that hard because you know injecting yourself with possible death seems like a last resort and he kind of goes to it a little quicker than I feel like McCoy would go to it. I mean he does a good job of making it clear that he's not in his right mind but still. I also love that Spock is like no doctor you can't take this virus. Don't do it. And then he sets it down and walks outside. I sure would hate if you injected yourself with this McCoy, he was like sure sure sure. So that just to me it was really funny. It's like I wonder what he's going to do!

Jarrah: Yeah exactly. One further to our point then there's like a captain's log at this point where they're like, this is the second day of seven we found nothing. The Enterprise is standing ready to assist us with labs and computers and the like why are they not already assisting you. Why have you just made them stand by for two days. So this is we have dealt with this problem by having Uhura and team work on it.

Andi: Yeah maybe we can meet some other doctors on the ship.

Jarrah: And then this is when we can steal the communicator so we're saying they don't need to steal the communicators? I mean I think it would still be helpful. I mean I don't know why, what would motivate them to if they're not like if they're not bad kids.

Sue: Kids are jerks?

Andi: Yeah what I was thinking to. Like what is their motivation for it, because their motivation for stealing communicators in this is basically just to be shits.

Jarrah: What if there could be something like a storm or something else that prevents them from communicating. Like some other factor that would like add tension and make it you know difficult because the crew on the Enterprise is doing important things that the people on the ground need to know.

Sue: See I think you could eliminate the we can't communicate issue and still create suspense around the vaccine because it- like those things aren't quick right? McCoy could come up with something and say I think this is going to work but we need to run it through the computers and the computers run it, but that can take more time. Right. We're not going to have an answer until it's too late. So we have to take a risk and decide if we're going to inject this or not.

Jarrah: So another question for Sue's science corner. How do vaccines work? Roughly.

Sue: I wrote a paper on this in ninth grade biology many years ago. So vaccines generally work before you get the virus because what they are they are cut up pieces of the virus so that they can't actually infect you when you get the vaccine but your body reacts to them anyway creating a resistance/immunity to said virus so it knows how to fight it. So if you already have a virus and you are given a vaccine it probably- if my memory serves would not do anything.

Jarrah: That was my understanding is well. And so I was a little confused but I mean it doesn't mean you couldn't inject something that would kill a virus but you-

Andi: Yeah, just make it a cure!

Jarrah: Yeah. We found a cure we found an antiviral medication whatever, we engineered a thing to attack the pathogen.

Andi: Yeah. See I think it would be better if instead of Spock setting down the the cure because now it's a cure and walking out of the room. McCoy could just be like I am willing to take this risk and that would be plenty of tension if he still goes, because I thought that that scene was actually quite effective where he like falls on the ground and Spock is like checking on him and then they don't know whether or not it's working. I thought all that worked pretty well. It just seemed like an extra silly thing that he did that on his own.

Sue: So apparently there is something called a therapeutic vaccine that can help the immune system to better recognize a virus and attack it. But vaccines are not cures. It's not the same thing.

Jarrah: One thing that I sort of failed to mention in the part with Louise where is that like after Louise attacks them and then dies. And like Miri's really upset and Kirk is also like holding her in a way that's like also kind of intimate. I maybe would have made that someone else or maybe it would have been better if he just hadn't been so creepy earlier on.

Andi: Or it could be Rand?

Jarrah: Yep. Also we have, we're just going to cut the part about Rand and look at my legs right.

Andi: Yeah. That's hideous.

Yes. We just have them all like getting sicker. Yeah. So yeah I mean so then they at the end Kirk comes in to like try and beg for the communicators back and stuff.

Andi: I still think that they need a convincing scene like he goes and talks to them. But I think it would be better if it was Miri instead of Kirk that does it.

Sue: Right because she's not dumb. She understands and she can explain to them what's going on and why they need to listen.

Andi: The way Kirk did it was first of all he didn't actually tell them the most important stuff first.

Jarrah: He's like look you guys are hitting me in the face. That means you're doing the hurting! And I'm like I don't know that that like would actually work.

Andi: Just say that you have a cure man like there's no need for all this.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Andi: So if you do Miri instead, first of all it gives her more agency it gives her a more interesting arc. And secondly she can actually communicate to them in a way that Kirk can't, makes more sense.

Jarrah: Yeah. Yeah I really didn't buy that like with their supposed level of child psychology that they would've like responded to that argument. That's basically like a you know, you say adults or grups are bad because they hurt people but you're the ones beating me in the face with a bowling pin.

Andi: This episode has some amazing moments.

Jarrah: It does. Yeah so I agree. Convincing scene, Miri's in charge. I guess I'm just, so in the original premise when they leave once the kids get the cure do they assume that they're still going to keep aging really slowly.

Andi: Yeah. They don't say.

Jarrah: In our version it doesn't matter because they're just kids. Yeah. They're not like super aged adults or childlike adults.

Andi: Yeah.

Jarrah: Cause that would be weird.

Andi: Yeah. They don't even they don't even address it like it has that whole TOS thing where like they get some sort of solution and then they cut straight to the bridge and they're leaving. Which has always been very abrupt.

Jarrah: I feel like they should have at least in the original said like they're going to go back to having normal life spans now or something because if they don't then basically they, then the original scientist succeeded and all they needed was this cure to make their disease like the engineered pathogen work.

Andi: Yeah, but like if you added to the ending so it's not so abrupt, it would balance some of the stuff that we cut.

Jarrah: Agreed. So maybe we get more background like maybe we meet some of the people that are going to go down and work with these kids.

Andi: I was thinking more along the lines of we go back to Uhura doing a global solution. Yeah. I mean just something.

Jarrah: But even still like we need to find out. You know they're not going to just leave all these kids by themselves, I think it is fair to say like they're going to send down a team of people or else evacuate the planet, but if it's a whole planet full of kids then that might not be realistic. So maybe we like meet the ship that's coming to meet them with like the experts and the teachers or something or see something, some sort of

conclusion with Miri where Miri is going to be like maybe we see her getting the vaccine. Which also I'm pretty sure that even if it's cure it doesn't just make your blotches instantly disappear from your face.

Andi: But that was cool Jarrah!

Sue: It is 24th century medicine.

Andi: That woman grown you in kidney in Sue's favorite moment. She took a pill and she grew a new kidney.

Sue: How weirdly specific of you to remember that.

Andi: Of course I remember.

Jarrah: Okay, okay fine. Suspension of disbelief.

Andi It looks cool!!

Sue: I watched a Voyager episode this week where the doctor just you know injects some genetically changing material into somebody's neck and their entire like physical form changes immediately.

Jarrah: Okay fine.

Andi: You lose Jarrah, you lose.

Jarrah: All right. Well sure. So yeah. How should things wind up with Miri as a character? Because also like they just, I don't even know like we just don't even- she doesn't have a conclusion and I don't feel like.

Sue: I think if we're establishing her earlier on as like the leader here then, and then we're also establishing her as being more intelligent than she is in the episode that aired. I think. We have a discussion of like I'm going to make sure to take care of these people and thank you for helping us. And we are we're looking forward to fixing this and maybe we can blah blah blah blah. And like the button scene that we get on a lot of TOS episodes.

Jarrah: Instead of them joking about like I don't date older women. Yeah that would make sense.

Andi: I think our episodes better guys, it was better from the moment we called it Bonk! Bonk!

Jarrah: I agree. Well and we're kind of at our you know approximate time for an episode. So was there any final thoughts or are we going to leave it at that.

Andi: I think this episode has some interesting moments in it but I still don't get what the theme is. I don't get the theme of our episode but at least it's more enjoyable.

Jarrah: Yeah...

Sue: I think this one is just supposed to be-

Andi: A shenanigans episode?

Sue: Like a science fiction episode of like look at this thing that's happening on this planet that we can't wrap our heads around. I don't think we're quite at the morality play stage yet.

Jarrah: I agree, I don't think it's supposed to really have a message other than maybe like a secondary message of don't mess with life extension but, and maybe that kids are basically animals left to their own devices but I don't think that it was meant to be like you know one of the great TOS message episodes and it's

more just like they encounter an interesting problem and they solve it. Yeah well you know so we, good job guys, way to re-write an episode.

Andi: Now we just need to get someone to shoot for Bonk! Bonk!

Jarrah: Yes exactly. And thanks to the listeners who suggested doing an episode rewrite we just sort of chose this one except based on one that was salvageable, and but still a little bit problematic so hopefully you enjoyed it. And if people want us to suggest a specific re-write or send us any other feedback you can do that by emailing woman@warp.com or visit us on Facebook or Twitter at Women at Warp or on our Web site womenatwarp.com. So that is it for us for tonight. Andi where can people find you elsewhere on the internet?

Andi: Easiest place is on Twitter [@firsttimetrek](https://twitter.com/firsttimetrek) where I'm live tweeting my first time through Star Trek and Sue.

Jarrah: And Sue?

Sue: I am on Twitter at [@spaltor](https://twitter.com/spaltor)

Jarrah: And I'm Jarrah and you can find me on Twitter [@jarrahpenguin](https://twitter.com/jarrahpenguin), or on tumblr [@trekkiefeminist](https://www.tumblr.com/trekkiefeminist) on tumblr.com. Thanks so much for listening.