

## Women at Warp Episode 57: To Julie Newmar, Thanks for Everything

Jarrah: Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp! Join us as a crew of four women Star Trek fans boldly go on our biweekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name is Jarrah, and thanks for tuning in. Today with us we have Grace!

Grace: Hey y'all!

Jarrah: And we have Andi!

Andi: Hello!

Jarrah: And we have a bunch of barbarians in fluorescent furs.

[laughter]

Grace: I'm surprised they found where we all lived, simultaneously.

Jarrah: Yes.

Grace: That is the level of organization I would not have expected them to have but... I'm just proud of them at this point. Really.

Jarrah: Yeah, for sure. They came a long way to find us and be part of the show. You can hear them if you listen very closely, grunting in the background.

[laughter]

Andi: Gross.

Jarrah: So we will be talking about the Original Series episode *Friday's Child*, but before we get to that I just want to remind you quickly about the Women at Warp Patreon which is how we keep our show going, pay for hosting and our equipment and get out to conventions and do promotional type things to get more people listening to the show. Thank you so much to everyone who's already supporting us, if you would like to become a Women at Warp patron or to increase your patronage, you can visit [patreon.com/womenatwarp](https://patreon.com/womenatwarp) and in exchange you get cool bonus content like you get to watch-a-long tracks where we watch episodes like *Sub Rosa* and comment to them so that you can watch them along like you're watching with us.

Grace: It's like you're there in the room with us, while we're being obnoxious and you can hear us eat sometimes over the microphone. OK that's all just me. But still it's an experience like none other.

Andi: I swear a lot.

Jarrah: There are a lot of cat interruptions. Yes.

Andi: Yes.

Grace: So it really is just like you're watching TV with us.

Jarrah: Basically. Yeah.

Grace: So give us money for that... [laughter] is what we're saying.

Jarrah: We love you all listeners.

Grace: We love you so.

Jarrah: So! *Friday's Child* time. *Friday's Child* being the full of woe one, I assume.

Grace: This child deserves a spanking.

Andi: Or a slap.

[laughter]

Jarrah: Or a oochie-woochie-coochie-coo obscure earth dialect. So, do one of you want to recap the episode, maybe, Grace do you want to do it?

Grace: Honestly, this is probably the third or fourth time I've seen this episode and the plot still confuses the dickens out of me. Basically what I glean from it is that a landing party goes down to a planet that they want to have a mining agreement with, but there are all these savage barbarians in pastel furs. Which is already a pretty weird concept but the Klingons are in there also trying to get in on this sweet mining deal. But they have a thing in this culture where they just want to fight all the time and the leader has a pregnant wife and...

Andi: Shenanigans!

Grace: Shenanigans, pretty much. And long story short it ends up happening that they have to kind of head for the hills with the pregnant wife after her husband is killed and she's decided that now McCoy is the father of her child.

Andi: Yeah, this is a really weird episode. Plot makes no sense.

Jarrah: It really doesn't make sense that a society that thinks that fighting people and killing people is better than sex is going to survive.

Grace: Yeah, you'd think they wouldn't have made it past the Bronze Age like... at best.

Jarrah: Maybe they gestate really quickly and normally give birth to litters. And this is... an aberration. I don't know.

Grace: Oh no, then they'd be running in herds.

Jarrah: Yeah, and meanwhile... up on the *Enterprise*... We have a pretty dull B-plot, I think where Scotty is in charge and they get a distress call that turns out to be fake. And then they have to go back.

Grace: I actually appreciate that B-plot though because we get to see Scotty put in a position of power where, pretty admirably, he's able to say right off the bat, "No this is my duty as Starfleet Officer to put my feelings aside and go after what could be a shipful people in trouble" and I think it's cool that we get that little moment with him. Other than that though it is really just kind of there to fill space.

Jarrah: Yeah, I think it really helps the pacing and the suspense because the plot is a little confusing so it helps that you have the ability to... like, I felt like the pacing between the planets scenes and the *Enterprise* scenes was quite good but I actually didn't... I mean, I think Scotty at the beginning is pretty good but then when they get to the place they realize it's a fake and he's just like, [Scottish accent] "Agh it's a fake!" And then...

Grace: It took them awhile to figure out that that was a fake distress signal...

Jarrah: Yeah, and I feel like, Uhura should have figured that out.

Grace: I definitely think so, yeah. Or maybe just anyone standing in the background should have been like, "Hey, they called our ship by name. That's not a general distress signal."

Jarrah: Yeah, and then they just wait there and cause he's like, "Well, we'll wait to make sure." But then! They get a second distress call that seems like it's legitimate and he's just like, "Nooooo."

Andi: He's following the ancient wisdom, the ancient Russian wisdom, of "Fool me once, fool me twice."

Grace: "Fool me three times, three times a lady."

Andi: Yeah, I'm pretty sure that's exactly how they used to say it in Leningrad.

Grace: [Russian accent that actually sounds more like the Count from Sesame Street] “One time, two time, three times a lady.”

[laughter]

Jarrah: Yeah, so that's the B-plot. Back to the A-plot. I'm assuming we don't really need to talk about much more about the *Enterprise* but it's there, it happens.

Grace: I guess.

Jarrah: They eventually come back and help out.

Andi: Uhura's cat eye is flawless as usual.

Jarrah and Grace: Yes.

Grace: So what's new?

Jarrah: I was a little weirded... I mean Chekov, this was like a second episode and they thought he was going to be super popular with teens and so they like put him in this position where he's like running around doing like, three jobs on the bridge and he's looking in Spock's console and being like, “I think it's a Klingon ship!” and you're like, “Don't we have like, another science officer that can back up all that?”

Grace: Also, note his sweet Beatles haircut because again, they wanted him to be popular with the young people.

Andi: I'm pretty sure that is... a very cheap wig.

Grace: Yeah, it looks like it.

Andi: I don't think that's his real hair, I'm gonna be real.

Grace: No.

Jarrah: I really wish that just wearing that cheap wig was the secret to popularity.

Grace: Is that all it takes?

Jarrah: Everything would have been so much easier in high school, you guys.

Andi: High school popularity based on who has the more flawless wig.

Grace: The more flawed Beatles wig, more like. But, guys that trick won't work for us because you can't hear a wig on the podcast.

Andi: Rats.

Jarrah: [sighs]

Grace: [glumly] I know. Back to square one. We're just going to have to rely on our [sarcastically] personalities.

Jarrah: That will never work. Well, alright. So. Let's dig into this. I was actually surprised re-watching this that it actually felt like it took a long time to get to Eelen.

Grace: It did, yeah.

Jarrah: It was like, 20 minutes in. Because, that's such an important part of the story and that was really like what DC Fontana was aiming for, was to have a story about this, in her case, in her original draft, this like, really unlikable woman. But, they go down to this thing and they're kind of like messing around trying to figure out whether they want to fight the Klingons and... oh. Also, Kirk's kind of an idiot in this episode.

Grace: Even if he does get some pretty good one liners.

Jarrah: He does. But like the beginning they beam down and redshirt just like, sees a Klingon and draws his phaser, and gets killed by these barbarian throwing stars.

Grace: He gets a ninja star right to the boob, and dies instantly.

Jarrah: And then Kirk's going around being like, "Why was my man killed!?" And you're like, "If only you would've shown a modicum of that concern in *Wolf in the Fold*."

Grace: Also, dude, he pulled a gun, because he saw a Klingon!

Jarrah: Yeah! And Kirk even goes like, "No! Don't! Grant!" But then he's all mad that his guy is dead even though his guy was an idiot and then he like, almost touches the food that he's going to... Like, McCoy's been to this planet and apparently doesn't take enough time to like, tell him the taboos until he's about to violate every single one. Yeah, so, that's the beginning part. And that takes a long time.

Andi: Well, let's be clear. We needed to spend a lot of time perusing the variety of bananas costumes on this planet.

Jarrah: Yeah. Yes. Go Grace and Andi!

Grace: Ohhhh my LORD!

Andi: These costumes. It's like pastel fur stoles, tassels, weird hats...

Grace: And leather pants!

Andi: And fur boots! And then like some sort of weird ass hat that is also a high ponytail?

Grace: See, with these guys if you ever needed to know what the outfits in a Dr. Seuss S&M club would look like, now you no longer have to wonder. The color palette is there. The gladiator hair is there. It just raises so many questions. Are there pastel critters running around that they hunt for fun? Is there a Joanne's going out of business on their planet?

[laughter]

Jarrah: Why would you wear a full spandex bodysuit with a hood in a desert climate?

[laughter]

Grace: To keep the sand out of your ears, clearly.

Andi: I'm pretty sure that this is what would happen if you had bondage gear that was being designed by your grandmother's upholsterer.

[laughter]

Andi: Just, there's... random gold tassels.

Grace: If you're into chair play. That's just where you sit on each other, really. Sometimes you take a little nap.

Jarrah: Well, I'm just really sad we never got to see the fluorescent animals that led to those furs.

Grace: I know, that's one thing that I feel like the costumers always forget they're implying about the planet where this clothing is coming from, that this is stuff that at the stage that their society is in it would need to be made up out of plentiful resources. So again maybe a furniture store just crashed down onto the planet out of nowhere and they pillaged it? There's so many questions and, oh yeah Eleen is played by the incomparable Julie Newmar, who's got this really funky veil coming out of her hair that's attached to her dress and she's got a wig thing going on that looks like one of those scrunchies that has fake hair on it. So it's supposed to look like a

bun but it looks like you found it at a Claire's. There's a lot going on there.

Andi: To me it looks like plaited bread, like you'd see on *Great British Bake-Off*.

Grace: Oh my God, she's got a challah hair! That's what it is!

[laughter]

Grace: So, not only are they a tribe of barbarians but they also are celebrating the Jewish New Year.

[laughter]

Andi: I do have to say that most of the enjoyment I get out of this episode is watching these dudes that look like rejects from Lady Gaga's backup dancers fighting each other with really huge knives.

Grace: They look like the guys who Lady Gaga's backup dancers make fun of. Like, the guys they would try to shove in a locker.

Jarrah: I like how they have this this whole thing in the beginning about how their like, throwing stars, can be just as deadly as phasers but they're clearly not.

Grace: Only if you know how to aim, man.

Jarrah: Only if you get the guy with the phaser distracted enough for long enough that you can throw the star at him. But DC Fontana had intended when she was creating the tribal culture she said, "I was borrowing a little bit from Arabic tribes but I was also borrowing from the monarchies of Europe where they were also regal all the time in terms of..." you know in that case she's talking about like, saying that they're all very tall. And she put in the bird symbolism which, I don't know if their like, ponytails coming out of their heads was supposed to be a bird thing? Or like?

Andi: I did notice that one of them had like a feather collar type thing. One of the women.

Grace: If they were going to try and do that with the hair then they should have given everyone a duck tail.

Jarrah: Yes. And there's a big like, bird banner in the tent but the tent looks like pretty similar to, I thought, like the tent in *The Apple* where they all hang out. So it's again like, this whole conflation of like, Eastern...

Grace: Do you think they reused the set?

Jarrah: Maybe, parts of it, like... and actually it looks similar to the insides of the tents in the *Paradise Syndrome*. But in the case of like, *The Apple* and this one you have this conflation of like, Eastern culture with primitivism and this idea that like, you're going to have an oppressive barbaric society.

Grace: And of course when they first go into the tent we get to hear that "do-dah-ta-do-do-do" noise.

Jarrah: Oh yeah, just thank goodness they didn't paint them brown this time.

Grace: Ugh. Small miracle there.

Andi: They went out of their way to have blonde hair.

Grace: Yeah! They really did. But I couldn't help but wonder if the dude's like, head/hat ponytail thing... This is going to sound dorky because at first I was like, "Wow, those are some crappy wigs!" But then I was wondering, "Oh maybe they've got a Riders of the Rohirrim thing going on with their helmets and it's supposed to be fake hair up there and that's kind of a representative thing." But then that means they've got these brightly colored pastel critters and these long haired blonde critters running around and... again, can we just have a single shot in a petting zoo or something?

Andi: It's a desert planet. They're not going to have brightly colored fur creatures.

Jarrah: Did they talk about what they were giving these people in exchange for the mining rights? Because I can't imagine a really ethical relationship there.

Grace: No, I can't imagine one where they aren't really clearly coming off with a better deal than these people are. Wait, wait, I got it! I got it! It's a trade for upholstery tax.

Andi: Couches.

Grace: It all makes sense, now.

Andi: But, I mean when they're in these like, bargaining conversations? It's all about like, "I'm better than Klingons!" "No, no, the Earthmen, they suck, Klingons are better!" But they don't actually really offer much in like, a substantive way? Like, "Hey, I will give you this." It's more like, "Our culture's better, laugh at him!" "Our culture's better. He is weak and annoying."

Grace: Yeah are we gonna ever... We didn't hear an actual offer there.



Jarrah: Yeah, exactly like, they're coming in and they're going to take these people's resources and there's sort of an attempt to make it seem like, altruistic by saying this, whatever mineral, is necessary for life support systems on ships, but I just can't imagine it being like, a really ethical thing from a sort of Starfleet perspective.

Andi: Also, James on our Facebook page pointed out, "It seems like the prime directive should have applied because it's a pre-warp society. But I guess that does NOT apply when they have resources the Federation needs."

Jarrah: Yeah, exactly. Like, that's why I'm like, "What are they giving them?" They've already like, let them know they have advanced technology and they let them take their phasers and communicators. But like, I can't imagine it's like, a you know, Voyager-esque scenario where it's like, "We're giving you our library in exchange for your minerals."

Grace: "We're going to tell you a story about Gilgamesh. Yeah, that's the ticket. Enjoy!"

Jarrah: "Send people to style your hair!"

Grace: They're going to pay them in conditioner.

Andi: If I ever have to bargain stories I'm going to tell them the entire four book story of Twilight.

Grace: I think they would hunt you down after that.

Andi: And I'm like, "And then the very end there's a huge battle that doesn't actually happen and wastes a third of the book." And then I'll get murdered.

Grace: See, what I would do is I would Sheherazade it and read them like, the first half of a Tom Clancy book and be like, "Oh, if you want this to keep going to find out how it ends you're going to have to do something for meeee." Also, that dude puts out so many books I could keep that scam going forever.

Jarrah: Read *Game of Thrones* and then it's like, "Now we have to wait for George R.R. Martin to finish the next one!"

Grace: See, that sounds like a quick way to get our planet bombed.

[laughter]

Grace: Out of pure frustration of, "When is it coming outtttt!?"

Andi: Poor George R.R. Martin. And we're going to expose him to intergalactic pressure for his writing.

Grace: Because he wasn't under enough already.

Andi: Yeah, word.

Grace: That's how we're going to end up with George R.R. Martin defecting from planet Earth. He is going to seek sanctuary with... oh... let's say the Cardassians. They appreciate some good bloodshed.

Jarrah: By the way, last night, sort of side moment, at my mom's birthday party someone said... was talking to me about Star Trek and they were talking about the Cardassians and someone goes, "I don't know how anyone can watch that junk." And we're like, "What?" And she's like, "That Kardashian stuff!" We're like, "No, it's different, it's *Star Trek* and she's like, "Oh, *Star Trek's* great. Anyway. So we need to talk about Eleen.

Andi: Do we?

Jarrah: The first time we meet her, she is Akaar's wife and he's basically like, "Hey, I'm an old dude who got me a young lady who's going to have my baby."

Grace: Check out my beautiful prop here.

Jarrah: Yeah. And you're not allowed to touch her because she's the wife of a Tier.

Andi: Although, let's be fair, there does seem to be some super weird culture issues around the touching of women anyway because apparently Kirk almost had to fight some woman's relatives to the death because he almost took a cookie from her. So.

Grace: [scoffs] It didn't even look like a good cookie.

Andi: No, it really didn't.

Grace: I mean, if it was really good like butterhorn or something I'd kill a man over that, but...

Andi: So, it's not just Eleen and her Tier situation, it seems like it's all the women? It just seems like maybe she has some extra problems.

Jarrah: Like, anyone has to kill the person who touches her instead of just her male relatives.

Andi: I don't know. It's not really all that well thought out. Let's be real.

Grace: Maybe it's like that Princess Diana thing whereas like, a monarch, or someone directly related to one, she belongs to the people now.

Andi: Oh, maybe.

Jarrah: Eesh.

Grace: Now she's the people's property. Creepy.

Jarrah: I mean, that is not an uncommon thing in like, Earth history to see a woman who is bearing an heir to a throne as like, property of the state. I mean, or even just royalty in a way as like property. Especially women. But this idea is like, "It's your duty to bear this heir. The life inside you, or the fetus inside you is more important than you."

Grace: You are officially a vessel now, yes.

Jarrah: Yeah, exactly, and you don't really have any say over what's going on.

Grace: Our future heir is now riding on the S.S. Disposable Mom. Toot, toot!

Jarrah: Yeah, exactly.

Grace: Aww, I just depressed myself there.

Jarrah: Yeah. But then, in the middle of the night, those sketchy Klingons and Maab, who is a super tall blond guy in a tassel outfit...

Grace: Is he going to twirl them for us?

Andi: His eyebrows are like, frosted. I don't even know what to say about about that. What kind of spa do they have on this desert planet?

Jarrah: The best spa.

Grace: Does he have reverse tinting done on them?

Andi: I don't even know. But they're like, sparkly.

Jarrah: And so they take over and they kill Akaar and so Eleen is basically like, "OK I have the heir and like you're taking over, you've staged a coup. Clearly I have to die now."

Andi: Clearly.

Jarrah: But then, the Starfleet people are like, "No, not cool. We can't let you just kill this pregnant woman." And she gets mad and is like, "I wanted to die. It's their fault. They should all get killed." So then everyone's just waiting to get executed. And then they decide, "Let's escape!"

And let's see if Eileen wants to come with us.”

Grace: They have a, “Ahh, screw this!” moment.

Andi: This is like, the rerun of so many Star Trekky “they get captured and escape” plots.

Grace: Pretty much.

Jarrah: Yeah. I don't know why you would think two guards in purple boas was enough to hold Kirk, Spock, McCoy.

Grace: They were hoping they would be blinded by their eleganza.

[laughter]

Jarrah: But... so then they escaped into the caves and this... there are... I mean, okay one thing, one good thing I'll say about this episode is that this is actually a pretty gorgeous episode. It's... the on location stuff really makes a difference especially when you compare it to like the Season 3 episodes where they were rarely on location you can really see like, you put effort into the look of this episode. And there's also some quite nice direction with some of the shots like there's a part where the baddies, not the baddies, the barbarians, what are they called? The Capellans? They pull knives on Kirk and there's like a shot where it's like looking down the blades of the knives at Kirk's face.

Grace: Yeah, that was a fantastic shot. And I love how, and this is going to sound very trite, but, it's one of those shots that really does television as a medium a service because, especially for the 60s, because so much of it has this theatrical atmosphere and this attitude and the lighting and the ridiculous costuming but that is really just a moment where they're like, “But we can do this! We couldn't do that on a stage.”

Jarrah: Mm-hmm. And Kirk, Spock and McCoy get some cool buddy moments.

Grace: They do, they get a lot of them. Which is something, something okay to take away from this episode we get lots of snark. We get that great line at the very end. “I think both of you are going to be impossible to deal with for the next month.”

Jarrah: Yes. Insufferable.

Andi: I mean, it's true. Definitely true.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Grace: How easy were they to deal with in the first place?

[laughter]

Jarrah: But man like, if you had had... just you had a story where they were just helping some random person there wasn't all this weird "gender/pregnancy/touching people without consent" issues. If you just had a thing where they were helping someone else escape through the mountains and had these cool buddy moments like it could have been a really cool episode.

Andi: I don't know. I still think it's lacking a theme.

Jarrah: Yeah, that's true.

Andi: And the plot is still pretty incoherent. So like, if we totally took out super creepy overtones of pregnant women and their agency. And then also, you know, the horrible costumes and stuff like that we'd still be left with a pretty incoherent plot that doesn't really go anywhere and doesn't really teach us anything about humanity which is the point of *Star Trek*.

Grace: That said, though, the whole property aspect of how Eleen is treated and the whole "Don't touch me!" thing really does play into a complaint that I've known a lot of pregnant people to have and that is that people will, without their permission, just touch their bump or will just come up and approach them without their permission. And then they get in trouble... and then they get called like bitchy or whatever. It's like, "Wait, don't... I don't know you, don't touch me. Don't touch me. Don't touch me." And it's something that every person I know who has had a baby has complained about at some point.

Andi: Well, it goes along to what we're talking about before it's like, when women are pregnant they become like, public property, almost.

Grace: Which is so... so messed up. I mean that is a point where you're probably feeling incredibly vulnerable.

Andi: And uncomfortable.

Grace: Yeah! Constantly uncomfortable! And then people just get to be like, "No, but I'm allowed to touch you all I want."

Andi: "Because I like babies!"

Grace: And correct me if I'm wrong but this discussion was on an episode of All Things Trek, was when I first met a couple of you I think, for the first time.

Jarrah: Andi and Sue, yeah.

Grace: Yeah. And that's... and we came to the agreement that we need to put out "don't touch me" maternity merch with Julie Newmar on it. Which I still think is a great idea.

Jarrah: Oh my gosh, it's so frustrating.

Grace: Don't touch me!

Jarrah: Like and, there's this sort of idea in this episode that he's justified because he's a doctor and she requires medical care. That's not actually true. You still need informed consent and prior consent to, for a doctor to like, touch you or administer medical care unless you're like passed out or something or about to die.

Andi: Unable to consent.

Jarrah: Yeah. And she has a burn on her arm. So like, she's not going to die from that. Doesn't look... probably painful but if she says repeatedly she doesn't want him to treat it he's not justified in hitting her, to get to treat it.

Grace: Couldn't he walk her through how to take care of it herself.

Jarrah: Yeah, that's another good option.

Grace: Just saying, you got options here, McCoy.

Jarrah: Yeah, but they're basically just like, "Oh, this silly woman."

Grace: Sorry. Sorry, Mah-coy, as she calls him.

Andi: Yeah, it's really frustrating because she says very clearly not to touch her several times, she says very clearly you know, her boundaries and stuff? And his response is to ignore that, repeatedly, and then when she fights back to physically subdue her. And the thing that's so creepy about it is that after that she like, becomes submissive towards him?

Grace: Because she's afraid she's going to get smacked!

Andi: Eh, I don't know it's more like he earned the right to touch her.

Jarrah: Yes.

Andi: It's like he...

Jarrah: He displayed his dominance.

Andi: Yeah. And it's super creepy.

Grace: Also not just as a woman, but just as someone who's really touch sensitive and really dislikes being touched without my permission... it kind of makes me see red a little bit because I've also... there are all kinds of people that have had to deal with people just coming up and unexpectedly hugging them or touching them and you having to be like, "I actually don't like that." And then they treat it like you have slighted them, when, it should be perfectly fair and reasonable to just say, "No, I just don't like to be touched, okay? Respect that." Ugh.

Jarrah: That gross comment like, "Oh, did you give her a happy pill?" and he's like, "No, a right cross or something?" And then he's like, "Oh, is that something in your toolkit?" and he says like, "Well it is from now on!" which is also gross.

Grace: That said, are happy pills just straight up a thing in the future? What's the implication there?

Jarrah: Yeah, it's not like what we mean today by happy pill.

Grace: You know, just have yourself a happy pill wash it down with a glass of instant smile.

Jarrah: But yeah, it's like this... he does have a line saying, "You listen to me young woman!" because like, age and gender justify his dominance more. "I'll touch you in any way or manner that my professional judgment indicates."

Grace: Eh, that's unprofessional.

Jarrah: And she's just like, "Oh, okay now, because you could tell about my baby and you demonstrated you're the alpha male." But Grace, even though I agree I don't think she appears to be like, frightened she's going to get hit again? But she would be justified in that. And she's basically like, the slowest moving one in this group of three male friends.

Grace: Yeah, she's waddling for two.

Andi: She's in the desert in a black dress, pregnant, with a bunch of strange dudes. She doesn't seem frightened? I would be frightened. But I want to go back a little bit to how he talks about how his like, professional judgment? I don't know about you guys? But I don't trust doctors right away. It takes a while before I'll trust a doctor. I've had bad experiences with them in the past. And it kind of feels like one of those professions where people just assume that you should trust their authority like a police officer, as well, as another job like that, or a teacher. And I don't. And that's just through, I guess, experience? Where you are expected to give them authority right away based on their job title. And I don't think that's something that should happen.

Jarrah: Yeah, I mean, absolutely. And also like, our ability to trust people in those professions is mediated by like race, class and gender. So obviously, you know, there's going to be a certain... like people of certain races would be less able to trust a white police officer because you see what has happened before and like, same things with women and male doctors like, there's been bad experiences and also just like, is it even justified that you would just automatically trust someone because they have that education? It doesn't necessarily make them a trustworthy person.

Andi: Yes. And I mean McCoy is... the way they're presenting McCoy's perspective is he wants to help her and she's not letting him, but from her perspective he's some random dude that just kidnapped her.

Grace: He's some alien!

Andi: Yeah. It's just, the whole... I can't think of a worse McCoy moment for me than this. And it's frustrating, because I love McCoy so much.

Grace: This is definitely not the real McCoy.

Andi: Dun, dun dun!

Grace: Word play!

Jarrah: Yeah. So, it's interesting because then she basically... so she beans McCoy over the head.

Andi: Well, wait no we should probably talk about the fact that she has a baby?

Jarrah: Right. She has a baby.

Andi: In a cave.

Grace: She has a baby like Tony Stark makes a suit of armor! In a cave! In a cave! How's that for your 2010 references?

Andi: Yeah, and there's a weird thing where she doesn't want it. And McCoy's trying to convince her to love her own kid?

Jarrah: But there's this... yeah there's this thing where, it's like in her culture, the baby doesn't even belong to her so I think it's supposed to imply like she's afraid of having it maybe? Because she won't own... like she won't be responsible it will belong to the father?



Andi: Yeah, it's pretty confusing. I don't really get it. When you're doing an episode that's specifically all about alien customs make sure we understand those alien customs?

Jarrah: I think it's probably because of the rewrites that were done that I think... maybe if they had stuck with DC Fontana's script, or just like let her make the edits, that maybe you would have had slightly more coherent but because she had a really... originally intended Eelen to be really ruthless and like, hate the child so much that she would actually kill it in exchange for her own life, that that would make that scene make more sense. But instead it like... well, it probably would have had to be written differently but it seems like Gene Roddenberry when he did the rewrites was trying to make it more of a thing where like, as soon as she saw the baby she would love it? And so there had to be this like, thing where there was or some reason she didn't want it that made her seem more sympathetic or empathetic to us and then that that could be dealt with and then as soon as she had the baby she would be okay. Although, then it's confusing because then she still gets hits McCoy over the head and runs away. And leaves the kid.

Andi: Yeah, and I don't think we really know why she does that? Her motivations are not super clear.

Jarrah: It seems like maybe she's going to sacrifice herself and hope that the baby would escape that way, like would live? By being with the Starfleet crew, so that's why she says like, they're all dead and like, just trying to get everyone off the scent so that they can all escape and survive.

Andi: Yeah, that seems to be the most logical interpretation.

Jarrah: But yeah, it's confusing. So then obviously they figure out that... well, the Klingon guy is like, "No, they are not dead! I just want to go murder people because I'm a Klingon! And I have a phaser! Ha ha suckers!" And Kirk and Spock are like, expert archers with these bows that they made in like 10 minutes using twigs.

Andi: Okay, let me just say, that this is my favorite part of the episode. When Spock... when Spock and Kirk are like, "We made these bows out of twigs. And now we're going to use them with deadly force!" and then they make that... they shoot that Klingon in the knee. Ahhhh, it's so funny. It makes me laugh.

Jarrah: And they're like, "We'll surprise them because they never discovered archery!"

Grace: I could never see that scene without thinking of the bit in Futurama where they're trying to make a bow and arrow out of a stick and a bunch of caterpillars.

Andi: See, I can't see that scene without thinking of the famous Skyrim quote, like, "I used to be an adventurer like you until I took an arrow to the knee!" And I'm just thinking, "Awww that

Klingon's adventuring days are over!

[laughter]

Jarrah: Yeah. And then there's like, she tries to sacrifice herself but then Maab sacrifices himself because he is... has like made a bad decision by collaborating with the Klingon who turned out to be not trustworthy, even though that was pretty clear what was going to happen from the beginning. It was so... that part made no sense to me because he's like, "Oh, this Klingon guy is kind of turning on us. That was a bad decision. So I'm going to let him kill me. But then I'm going to get someone else to kill him." But it didn't make sense why he was upset that the Klingon went after the Starfleet people because he still wanted to kill the Starfleet people for violating their taboos.

Andi: Yeah. Yeah. These people make no sense, man. [sighs] You have to... if you're going to come up with a new culture you have to make it at least internally structured in a way that is rational. At least a little bit.

Grace: Something.

Jarrah: Yeah. So, I mean in the original, the ending was going to be that Eleen hates her baby so much she offers to let Maab kill the baby in exchange for her life and the baby is not Akaar's, the baby is a different person's? In the tribe? And she ends up being executed for committing adultery. Maab is executed for negotiating with the Klingons, and the baby is left to be raised by his grandfather until he's old enough to rule. But it still had that like end tag scene which would have been... really out of place. If they just followed a whole bunch of executions.

Andi: Man, DC Fontana went to the George R.R. Martin/Joss Whedon school of writing scripts. Let's just kill everybody.

Grace: She went full dark on this one. Full dark, no stars!

Jarrah: Yeah. So, I mean, I don't know how that would have gone? She said that she wanted the... she said, "My feeling was that not all women are mummies, some women do not like their children. Some women do not want to have their children. Some women abuse their children and that was a very real fact for me. I knew that and I wanted to subtly bring it out not that you can beat up a kid on screen obviously but she was willing to sacrifice the child for her own life and she was a selfish woman." And she said she was really disappointed, she almost took her name off the script by Gene Roddenberry changing things because Roddenberry and Bob Justman felt that the audience would dislike Eleen so much they wouldn't understand why our heroes were lugging her around with them. Maybe because they just believed in saving lives? You didn't necessarily have to be a good person to deserve that.

Grace: I definitely appreciate DC Fontana's sentiment though that not every person who is a biological parent should be a parent and is a parent just by that virtue. If you've ever known someone who has been in some kind of emotional or physically abusive relationship with a parental unit you will definitely understand that... that does not make you just... That doesn't make you a good parent just being a biological parent and it's something that I feel like we ignore a lot in pop culture. That really should just be acknowledged a little more.

Andi: I think there's a cultural expectation that when you see your kid it's like yeah, you know, flip a switch. So there's lots of stories about you know people that were not great before and then they had a kid and then they became better for their child.

Grace: I know, but how much do those have to hurt if you're someone who's had trouble with postpartum depression or just didn't instantly connect with your child.

Andi: That makes a lot of sense.

Grace: How damaging do you think that is?

Jarrah: Yeah. And I definitely appreciate that DC Fontana was trying to break stereotypes and maybe especially at that time it would have been groundbreaking to see that on TV. But I think it could also have been interpreted as then the woman must be punished for being a bad mother, because she is executed at the end for committing adultery even though she's basically like property of her husband. So, she is not being treated very well, she's being treated as like chattel, as a vessel for an heir. She decides to sleep with someone else. She doesn't want this baby. And then she ends up being killed, for basically being human. So. Or I guess for being Capellan. So, I don't know that it would have sent like, necessarily a better like, message from a feminist perspective? Although, DC Fontana does say it was in a way it was sort of a women's lib story, which I don't really get. But what she was trying to say was that like, the woman who was a pawn became the most powerful player in the game.

Andi: I do think that Julie Newmar and her... presence? Really helped this episode? Because she has this very strong way about her. And so like, when she's saying things... it's regal. She's very regal.

Grace: She has a very powerful presence.

Andi: I'm just sad because she is such a great actress and I don't feel like this episode served her very well?

Grace: No, not at all.

Andi: I mean she ended up... she had a lot of problems on that desert set for one. And she basically sweated in the desert, got slapped and then just like, I don't know, ran around telling people not to touch her.

Jarrah: And then had a baby and went oochie-coochie-coo a bunch and named it after these guys that rescued her.

Andi: Yeah. I mean... you do you, I guess. I don't know if I would have done the same thing but...

Grace: I don't think I would have.

Andi: Leonard James Akaar, I think his name was.

Jarrah: Akaar, yeah. And who actually becomes kind of a cool character in the novels.

Andi: Of course he does! Of course he does. Every time I think that they can't find a more obscure character to bring back in the books, y'all tell me about a new one. I thought they really were like, Anne Nored? Really? Shows up in the novels again, I guess? This baby. Of course.

Jarrah: The baby is a pretty cute baby

Andi: God, I love Trekkies, man.

Jarrah: Apparently, like, Eleen basically raised him to know that the Federation was good and he went and joined Starfleet and works for Starfleet.

Andi: Wow. But, I mean it does give us... as Grace was saying like, some of the high points of this episode is the snarky banter between our three boys and we do get some of that good stuff right at the end too.

Jarrah: Yeah the part where like, Kirk's all mad about like, "Why did they kill my guy!?" and then sits on it and is like, "Oh, I'm sorry I was really mad at you, McCoy." and Spock's all, you know, dissing them for not being logical and yeah. It's good times with the three guys.

Andi: I do love that... I mean, how many times have they been imprisoned at this point? I do love that at one point McCoy is like, "I've got to check out this pregnant woman, trying to fix her arm!" and Spock and Kirk inexplicably like, "Yeah, you are. You're gonna fix her arm. Yeah." and like share a look and then they attack the guards and I'm like, I don't know how that happened? But y'all are on the same page, so that's good. I would've definitely missed the signal? But okay.

Jarrah: And then like, Kirk and Spock figuring it all these like bizarre sort of *Arena*-like solutions to defend their position. Like, oh... Kirk was like, "Oh Spock if you don't think this communicator thing is going to work maybe we shouldn't try it." "Oh, I didn't say that, Captain." Oh you guys! Just kiss already.

Andi: Well there is a part where Spock gets hit.

Jarrah: And he's like, [gasps] "Spock!"

Andi: Kirk like, lunges basically like, "Spooooockkkk!" I'm kind of like, "Oh my goodness."

Jarrah: And Spock's just like, "Oh yeah, I'm cool."

Andi: I have lots of thoughts about Kirk/Spock and you know I see people... I understand like you might not ship it but they really gave them a lot to work with in the shipping department. The number of times Kirk mournfully goes, "Spooooockkkkk!" It's not zero.

Jarrah: I think it's cause the "ehhh" in Kirk's name isn't as good a vowel like, "Kiiiiirkkkkk!"

Andi: I did notice that though, he basically he was in a defended position, like in cover and he like, runs out of cover because he's so horrified that Spock might be injured. It's cute. It's super cute.

Jarrah: There's another like a little mild point that is important with the whole thing with like Mah-coy and things that apparently during the writing in this episode people behind the scenes were like, "How come the aliens always speak English?" because they hadn't really explained the Universal Translator I guess? And so Gene Roddenberry rewrote it to... in the book *These Are the Voyages*, Marc Cushman describes it as like similar to the Native Americans in a western? Like in the types of westerns that Gene Roddenberry used to write? Where they talk like more kind of in this like, formal English where they use like, words like "earth metals" instead of like "ore" or things like that. And that is also uncomfortable and perpetuates this idea that you know, if your English isn't perfect you're stupid and primitive. Even though they speak this other language. Well, I mean you could probably just make a judgement based on their fashion, but...

Andi: Yeah, that's what I was going to say, I'm like, I mean if you've got a fur stole... Overall I think the biggest problem with this episode is actually just that it's boring.

Grace: Yeah. It's definitely not exciting.

Andi: I mean I do like the fight scenes where they're all like, brawling with those giant knives but you know how I feel about knives.

Jarrah: And the rock explosions are good.

Andi: And I mean the fashion is just like, horrible, in such a pleasant way. I just love it. This right here is like the height of how much I love *Star Trek* fashion and how ludicrous it is. So funny. So watching those dudes, you know, roll around on the ground and like, stab at each other is pretty great. And then I really enjoyed the bow and arrows. But everything else was pretty meh for me.

Jarrah: Yeah, I think that you can see some areas that quite work, like even just the way that it starts in the first scene where they're in the conference room and preparing to meet these aliens. I think that there's some good attempts at making it more exciting and pacing it better but overall falls a little bit short. It was interesting to me in *These Are the Voyages* that the reviews of it all said it was super exciting. So it made me wonder how much of me finding it boring is just like the way TV has changed over 50 years?

Grace: Could be, but who knows.

Jarrah: It's nice to look at, but there are some some big problems with the depiction of Eleen.

Grace: Yeah, definitely.

Andi: I do have to say though that this is a super nostalgic for me. As Grace said earlier, Sue and I "met" discussing this episode and I still remember that conversation and being like, "Hey this Sue chick's alright!" And yeah that turned into beautiful friendship, didn't it? So I always have a special place in my heart for this episode because I still... I can hear Sue's voice in my head like, "When somebody says, 'Don't touch me!' don't touch them!" And it's just so Sue to me.

Grace: Wasn't that the first time we met too?

Andi: I think we had done an episode before?

Grace: I was going to say!

Andi: And then we had a... cause there was one episode where I was on by myself talking about First Time Trek and then there was a second episode where you bought both of us cause she was doing live blogging of TOS. And I was watching TOS for the first time so... If I'm remembering correctly? But that was a while ago.

Jarrah: I remember listening to that episode and that was the first time I heard of you guys and I was like, "These seem like some cool people."

Andi: Yeah and, Oren was talking about this girl named Jarrah who was Trekkie Feminist and was trying to get Star Trek to do a comment policy on their Facebook page. And I was like, "I

should check out this girl's Tumblr!" and then lo and behold.

Jarrah: And the rest is history.

Andi: Dun dun dunnnnn...

Jarrah: But we must rate this episode.

Andi. Oh gosh. Oh gosh.

Grace: I give it... four out of ten ninja stars to the boob.

[laughter]

Grace: You know what? Five. Five, just by virtue of Julie Newmar being there.

Jarrah: I will give it five challah hairdos out of ten.

Andi: I will give it three out of ten abnormally large knives being stabbed into a dude wearing a fur stole.

Jarrah: All very fair. Any final thoughts?

Andi: Julie Newmar ROCKS?

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Yeah.

Grace: To Julie Newmar, Love, Women at Warp?

Andi: Yeah, absolutely. Thanks for everything!

Jarrah: Awesome. Well, thanks for that discussion. So, Andi where can people find you elsewhere on the internet?

Andi: Easiest place to find me is on Twitter at [@FirstTimeTrek](#) where I'm live-tweeting through my first time watching *Star Trek* and I am currently on... finishing up the third season of *DS9* and about to start the second season of *Voyager* as well. Yes, it's very exciting.

Jarrah: And Grace where we find you?

Grace: Easiest place to find me is on Twitter, I'm at [@BonecrusherJenk](#).

Jarrah: And you can find me on Tumblr at [trekkiefeminist.tumblr.com](http://trekkiefeminist.tumblr.com) or on Twitter at [@jarrahpenguin](https://twitter.com/jarrahpenguin). And if you'd like to contact our show you can e-mail [crew@womenatwarp.com](mailto:crew@womenatwarp.com) or you can comment on our Facebook page or Twitter at [@WomenatWarp](https://twitter.com/WomenatWarp). Or you can review us on iTunes or you can comment on our website at [womenatwarp.com](http://womenatwarp.com). We love to hear from you.

Andi: Basically there are a lot of ways to get a hold of us, please do!

Jarrah: We want to make it easy for you because we love your feedback. We get a lot of really great letters from people and then occasionally we do mailbag episodes where we read some of the awesomest questions and answer them, so send us.... drop us a line and in the meantime enjoy your week. Thank you for listening.