

## **Women at Warp Episode 25: Spock's World, Amok Time, Excellent**

V/O:

You're listening to Trek F.M.

\*fight music from Amok Time plays\*

ANDI:

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

GRACE:

Hey everybody.

ANDI:

Sue.

SUE:

Hey there.

ANDI:

and Jarrah.

JARRAH:

"You never give up hoping, do you?"

ANDI:

Oh gosh.

GRACE:

That was dark. \*Jarrah laughs\* Dark way to start the podcast. \*all laugh\*

JARRAH:

OK. So if you hadn't guessed by my horrible quote reference there, today we are reviewing the TOS episode Amok Time. But before we do that, and Andi takes over again, I want to just give it a quick reminder about our Patreon, which is at [Patreon.com/womenatwarp](https://Patreon.com/womenatwarp). If you make even a small donation there you get access to some cool exclusive content. And it helps us support our work in promoting the podcast, and attending conventions, and things like that. So-

GRACE:

And fixing mics.

JARRAH:  
Yes exactly!

GRACE:  
Just saying...

JARRAH:  
It is very important. So hop on over to [PATREON.com/womenatwarp](http://PATREON.com/womenatwarp) if you'd like to support us there. Back to Andi!

ANDI:  
Yay! So yes, today we're talking about Amok Time. Which I'm pretty sure is one of those episodes that everyone remembers. It's one of the kind of episodes that's a fan favorite and a critical favorite. In case you do not, this is the one where Spock experiences Pon Farr and they go back to Vulcan, and then there's a fight to the death between Spock-

GRACE:  
Because Spock is horny.

ANDI:  
Basically. That's the gist of the episode. Spock gets horny and Kirk almost dies. It's pretty rough-

GRACE:  
*Because* Spock is horny.

ANDI:  
Because Spock is horny, yes.

JARRAH:  
Also this is the episode that has been spoofed many many times. Including in the Simpsons, The Cable Guy, Warehouse 13, Futurama, and an Eddie Murphy sketch in Delirious. So it's like- it's definitely one of the most famous episodes.

GRACE:  
It's one of easily the most spoof-able, also.

JARRAH:  
And it's also the first time Spock uses the Vulcan hand salute. So there's your fun fact.

ANDI:  
Yeah, I think there's a reason this episode is famous, and it's because it's good.

GRACE:

It is a fun episode.

ANDI:

It's a fun episode, it's good, it's got some really memorable moments, and we'll go through them. But one of the reasons we wanted to talk about it is because we actually have three women in this episode doing things. Like actually talking and participating in the plot.

JARRAH:

They make soup.

GRACE:

\*sinister voice\* And plans! Soup and plans. That is the title of this episode. \*all laugh\*

SSUE:

Yes. So there's a fair amount of women in here, so we're going to kind of go through the episode, and then we'll talk about some of the female characters and some of the themes that we see here.

JARRAH:

Also written by a woman!

ANDI:

Well it's written by Theodore Sturgeon, and then like the final copy was done by DC Fontana because she was their best script doctor.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And she was responsible for a lot of the sort of Vulcan culture stuff that ended up in the final cut.

ANDI:

You can always count on DC Fontana to Vulcan things up. And I for one appreciate her for that.

GRACE:

Get Vulcan with it. \*to the tune of Get Jiggy With It\* Nan na na na na na na. \*all laugh\* Na na na na na na. Get Vulcan with it. I don't know if the listeners can tell but it's really early where I'm recording. So- \*Jarrah laughs\*

ANDI:

Grace is a little bit \*pause\* punchy.

SUE:

Time displaced? \*all laugh\*

ANDI:

OK. So do we want to start with the synopsis?

JARRAH:

Sure.

ANDI:

Right. We start out with McCoy and Kirk talking about Spock and going "Hey, have you noticed anything wrong with Spock?" And it turns out that Spock's been kind of grumpy. Just a wee bit grumpy. And McCoy is trying to convince Kirk that this is actually a problem, and Kirk's like "He's probably fine." And then we have Nurse Chapel \*laughs\* making the soup. Bringin Spock soup. And then Spock has a hilarious tantrum, which is one of my favorite parts of the episode. He's like "Get this soup out of here!" And he like hurls it into the hallway, clatters with like very very nice noise so-

GRACE:

It's *incredibly* dramatic.

ANDI:

It is. It is very dramatic and it's exactly what two year olds do when they don't want to eat their peas.

GRACE:

Honestly I might even go as far as saying it's *the best* soup-related scene in Star Trek.

ANDI:

Wow.

SUE:

I don't know, I just watched some Enterprise episodes that talk a lot about soup. \*Andi laughs\* So there are a couple of contenders. \*laughs\*

JARRAH:

And I don't think it would even make the list if we broadened it to food related scenes, because I think that's definitely the Alfarian hair pasta food fight between Paris and Neelix. But! We digress. \*Sue laughs\*

SUE:

\*dramatically\* 10 chocolate sundaes.

ANDI:

I was going to throw chicken sandwich out there, a tribble and a chicken sandwich. \*Jarrah laughs\*

GRACE:

Now it's a tribble sandwich. Deal with it.

ANDI:

*Anyway.* But it is a good way to show right off the bat that something's wrong with Spock. We don't generally see Spock having two year old tantrums. And poor Nurse Chapel runs out of there like she's on fire. So it does what it's supposed to do, which is set up that something's wrong Spock.

GRACE:

*\*laughs\** Sorry. The first thing I thought was just *\*to the tune of Somethings up with Jack from the nightmare before Christmas\** somethings up with Spock, somethings up with Spock *\*all laugh\** do do do do doo.

ANDI:

There's a lot of singing this morning.

JARRAH:

I'm just saying that the music was great in the episode, when we were talking before the show, and now I'm like "The music is also great in this episode of our podcast."

ANDI:

Better.

JARRAH:

Yes. So something is definitely wrong with Spock, and he's all like "I can't talk about it. Because no Vulcan could ever talk about this."

GRACE:

*\*resentful teenager voice\** You wouldn't get it, *Kirk*.

SUE:

But Kirk keep pushing, right? And this is like what really gets on my nerves. He's like "I don't want to talk about it." And Kirk does not let it go. And even when Kirk thinks it's a *medical* thing, he keeps pushing and he wants to know what's going on. He's super nosy in this episode.

JARRAH:

To be fair, you know, Spock- by the time that Kirk really pushes it McCoy has basically told him "Spock is going to die if you don't get him back to Vulcan, and he's the only one who knows why. It's going to require you disobeying a direct order from Starfleet to get there." And also Spock has disobeyed Kirk's orders and like turned the ship around, and he's like "Yeah, that's maybe possible. I might have done that. I don't really remember." So I feel like for the sake of running the ship, and Spock's life, it's fair that Kirk is nosy. Like maybe not so much so quickly,

but he clearly needs to know what's going on. Otherwise they're going to lock Spock in a cell and he's going to die.

SUE:

Yeah. I just feel like "If he doesn't go back to Vulcan he's going to die" should be enough.

GRACE:

You'd think so.

ANDI:

I also don't really understand why he's going to die. Is it ever adequately explained?

SUE:

Something about the build up of something in his blood is going to do something that makes his organs not work anymore?

GRACE:

Horniness. It's horniness.

ANDI:

I get *that much*. I get like that he's going through like, these physical changes and stuff. But what I don't understand is what prompts it and what stops it. You know what I mean? So like, they talk about the timing of it like, it's because he's supposed to go back and claim his lady but-

JARRAH:

Like a salmon, but also a Vulcan.

ANDI:

\*laughs\* Yes, exactly. But I don't understand like, what it is about either the fight, or the ritual, or whatever that actually stops his Pon farr. Does that make sense? So I'm confused- I'm confused by the kind of mystical science we've got going on here.

SUE:

I think what actually cures it, which they can't say on TV in the 1960s, is the consummation.

ANDI:

Maybe?

JARRAH:

You know, there is an interesting connection with this idea that like, sex and violence are two sides of the same coin. And for men it's like "You must have one or the other." And it's actually like kind of a bit of a gross message if you think about it. But- there are issues.

SUE:

Here's the thing I don't get. This episode sort of puts it forth, because Spock was betrothed or whatever as a child, the implication is that this is the first time he's dealing with this because he and T'Pol haven't been wed yet. But *then* in- what, search for Spock? When he turns 7 he's experiencing the Pon Farr. So which is it? is it, you know, for the first time when you get to a certain age? Or does it actually happen when a Vulcan turns seven? Because one, it doesn't make any sense. And two, gross.

JARRAH:

Well I definitely recall an episode, I don't recall which one it was, where Grace and I talked about how Star Trek really avoids talking about the obvious solution of masturbation in these cases. But- yeah.

GRACE:

Because with Star Trek we can talk about all of these different cultural mores. We can talk about genocide. And all kinds of shenanigans. But the second you get to jerkin it off? That's when you crossed the line. *\*Andi laughs\**

SUE:

I think they kind of address it with Tuvok and the holodeck? Kind of? But not really. *\*laughs\**

JARRAH:

It's not Tuvok, it's Vorik in the holodeck.

GRACE:

*And Tuvok.*

JARRAH:

Oh do they do that holodeck with Tuvok too?

SUE:

Yeah, Tom sets it up for him. *\*all laugh\** If I remember correctly.

GRACE:

Tom Paris is your holographic wingman y'all.

ANDI:

Well, I just wanted to say that because we're talking about this, when I was reading *These Are The Voyages* I actually spit out my lemonade, because I was reading a memo that Gene Coon wrote where he was also expressing like "What's going on here? Why is he going to die?" And he goes "We have to learn why Spock will die if he doesn't get to Vulcan in eight days. What kills him? Swollen gonads?" Question mark. *\*all laugh\**

JARRAH:

OK. That makes me feel better about the joke I was going to make was “blue ears.” \*all laugh\*

ANDI:

But yes. So this is obviously like something that they were thinking about, but I don't know that they adequately express it. I feel like we kind of glossed over it, and then you know at the time nobody knew that 50 years later we'd be examining it in such depth. So I don't think that it's ever been-

GRACE:

\*sarcastic\* I think they knew *somehow*, in their heart of hearts.

ANDI:

Like “This Pon Farr thing is going to really become important.” \*all laugh\*

GRACE:

“They're going to analyze the hell out of this. You know it.”

ANDI:

Right. So Spock's going to die is the upshot. And Kirk gets direct orders to not take him to Vulcan. He has got some diplomatic emergency, which is probably not really an emergency, that they're like “NOPE. You gotta you gotta go there. You can't go to Vulcan.” So he's like, you know, doing the thing that Kirk does. Which is he's like “I'm a good little soldier until you tell me not to save Spock.” And he chucks everything and runs off to Vulcan.

GRACE:

\*Kirk voice\* “To hell with your orders. My friend needs to get laid!” \*Andi laughs\*

ANDI:

Although I don't know that he really understands what's going on. I think he- I think he's like us in that he's like he's accepted the fact that Spock will die if this does not happen. So therefore-

JARRAH:

No, but by that point he knows. Because he's told Spock, you know, “I'll keep this anonymous” because he's made Spock tell him what the Pon farr is, and Spock gives the whole talk about like “Birds and the bees are not Vulcans” and “I'm like a fish but not” and “I'm a Vulcan not a man.” And there's- it's actually- I really like that scene, and I like how Kirk is like “Why are we embarrassed talking about sex? It is just something that happens.” But so, he's promised Spock “We'll keep it confidential” so he can't tell Starfleet why he needs to get a Vulcan and they're like “Sorry, if you can't tell me then that's not a good enough reason.” So he *does* know by that point.



ANDI:

I know he knows, but I don't know that he understands. You know what I mean? He's like "OK, let's go salmon. let's get you to Vulcan."

GRACE:

"Let's get your ass upstream."

ANDI:

\*laughs\* Basically. And this is the first time we see Vulcan. So we get to Vulcan, and we see Vulcan for the first time, and it's pretty awesome. When I was first watching this-

GRACE:

A whole planet of matte paintings. It's the best!

ANDI:

It was though! Because I was just like "Everything is so bright!" And like, the color palette is so- it does look alien, and I just love the desert, and the really dramatic rocks. I've always really liked Vulcan, just in general, but this is the first time that I got to see it, and I just- I do think that it delivers. Even when I watched it, you know, decades later. I was just kind of like "Oooh!" and appropriately awed by the cool Vulcan desert-scape.

GRACE:

It is frickin neat.

ANDI:

Yeah. And I think at this point people are just excited to get more background on Vulcan and on Spock in particular, because he had become such an important and favorite character.

SUE:

I was actually surprised in seeing Vulcan that- I mean, I know we're only seeing one small part of it, but you don't even see a city in the distance. You just get a desert planet.

JARRAH:

There's a good point.

GRACE:

They're too good for cities.

JARRAH:

Well, they did a lot of their lighting by just like light painting on blank walls, and putting sets in front of them. So it could have just been a money issue.

SUE:

Yeah. No, that's definitely true. But I mean, we're going to Vulcan and we're only seeing a desert, and we're going there for an ancient ritual. And it just, to me, it makes Vulcan feel undeveloped I guess? Like, they're supposed to be so far ahead of humans and so big into the sciences, and like what we're shown is almost primitive, even though I really hate that word.

JARRAH:

Yeah. Well I mean, to some extent it goes to the point that like the Vulcans don't like to talk about this. This isn't part of their culture they're particularly proud of, and they've made this whole ritual to kind of obscure the illogic of it. So maybe it's purposefully set apart from the places where they do science.

ANDI:

I've also always really enjoyed kind of the, you know, you have the super logical side of Vulcan culture and then you have this really strong mysticism side of it. And I've always kind of liked the contrast of that. Like the idea that they're- yes they're very advanced, they're very smart, very logical. They've got all this math and science. But they still have like, these rituals and these kind of like mysterious ways about them. I've always really dug it. So we land on Vulcan, and it's exciting, and everyone's like "Oooh" at the paintings. And then we get to-

GRACE:

They get to cross a giant bridge and everything.

ANDI:

I know, it's *very* dramatic.

GRACE:

No touchdown is complete without a giant bridge.

JARRAH:

It's important, because he brings Kirk and McCoy with him, because they're his closest friends and it's like "Aww!"

ANDI:

Seriously though, that is an "Aaw!" moment. I was like *\*fondly\** "Spock!" Yeah. I think Kirk, at this point, I think we expect him to bring Kirk. But when he turns and he says like "I'm allowed to have my closest friends" and he was like "I would also like McCoy there." is the closest Spock has ever gotten to being like "I love you McCoy."

GRACE:

"Bruh. You're my bruh, bruh." *\*Jarrah laughs\**

ANDI:

So, I do think that that's cool. That, you know, he brings them and very specifically states that it's because they're his friends. Because he doesn't usually. Like, all of all of the love between them is usually shown through actions not words, which is something that I enjoy most of the time. But then it just does mean that when we *do* get to see this overt friendship that it hits me on the feels.

GRACE:

Ain't no feels like friendship feels.

ANDI:

True story.

JARRAH:

*\*dramatically\** Spooooock.

ANDI:

*\*laughs\** So they cross the bridge, and they get to this arena type area. And, you know, we start to see the Vulcans.

GRACE:

If you're a Rick and Morty fan it kind of looks like they've got a small army of Bird Persons. *\*all laugh\** It's awesome.

ANDI:

I just love that they bring T'Pau out on like this litter, with all of these like dudes in weird armor with the Bells.

JARRAH:

Yes!

GRACE:

Aggressively ringing their bells.

ANDI:

*\*laughs\** It's so good. it's so good. I just- I love it. Like they're wearing this- they look so *serious* but they are literally shaking giant like thing of tiny bells.

JARRAH:

Yes. And look like they're kind of dressed in tinfoil.

GRACE:

They were on their way to a baked potato party.

SUE:

Those are some pretty illogical outfits.

GRACE:

But I love that the introduction we get to T'Pol is that she's the only person who's ever turned down a seat on the Federation Council, isn't it?

JARRAH:

She's like, legendary. And Kirk's all "You know who that is?!" It's really cool.

ANDI:

I do like Kirk's hero worship of her. He's like, his eyes are so big, it's like "Oh my gosh!" And that's pretty cool.

GRACE:

\*as Kirk\* "Holy crap!"

ANDI:

It's a good way to set up that this is an important person, even outside of Vulcan, right away.

SUE:

Sadly though, she does not have good grammar. \*all laugh\* No, this was driving me up the wall. She was using like, the Middle English second person pronoun. So "thee" all the time. But that's the *indirect* object pronoun- or the object pronoun rather. And she never used the subject pronoun "thou." So it's always "Thee will do this" and like, it just sits in my brain wrong. It's "thou" and then "thee" and then "thy." She never says "thou" in the entire episode.

ANDI:

This is the equivalent of Sue getting angry about math. Now we have you getting angry about medieval grammar. I like it.

JARRAH:

\*laughs\* Excellent.

SUE:

Math and grammar. It reminded me of Miss Piggy and "moi."

ANDI:

But she looks bad ass doing it, Sue.

GRACE:

Kind of like Miss Piggy though. I could see it.

SUE:

\*laughs\* The Miss Piggy of Star Trek.

GRACE:

Yes. Me.

SUE:

*Moi.*

ANDI:

She is very regal.

JARRAH:

Celia Loveski, the actress who played T'Pol, was one of only 11 credited Trek guest stars born in the 19th century. She was born in 1897, and she also was married to the actor Peter Lorre and when-

GRACE:

No way!

JARRAH:

Yeah. And when he was forced to flee Berlin in 1933 she went with him. And finally they ended up in America. And he refused to let her work after they were married, believing that in a marriage quote "The man must do all the work." But after she divorced, she became his publicist, manager, secretary, financial planner, and friend. But she found it difficult to get acting work because of her Austro-Hungarian accent. And so she ended up in a lot of like "exotic" quote unquote roles.

GRACE:

T'Pol is also proof that so many Vulcans have names that sound like sound effects.\*all laugh\* T'Pol! T'Poling! Spooock!

JARRAH:

We actually see T'Poling before this, Spock's fiancée. Because she comes on the view screen and they have this whole like \*romantic voice\* "T'Poling my love, parted for me and never \*struggling\* parted. Never and always touching and touch. Always \*pause\* looking and never seeing and always \*pause\* feeling-

GRACE:

Spock is straight up creepin. \*Andi laughs\*

JARRAH:

"Never logic-ing. You are always mine!" and then she's like \*romantic voice\* "All of this stuff too. I await you."

GRACE:

Her response is pretty much "Yeah sure, why not?"

JARRAH:

And then they're like "Who is she?" And he's like "She's my wife" and Nurse Chapel's like \*sad trombone noise\*

ANDI:

\*laughs\* To be fair, whenever it comes to Nurse Chapel and Spock, Nurse Chapel is going \*sad trombone noise\* That's like the metaphor for their relationship.

JARRAH:

Pretty much Nurse Chapel and the entire show.

GRACE:

That's pretty much her musical theme of the show though isn't it?

SUE:

Why is she so into him?

ANDI:

She's the O'Brien of TOS.

GRACE:

Who isn't into Spock, dude?

SUE:

Well Uhura definitely is into Spock. But I don't \*trails off\*

ANDI:

I get why she's into Spock. I *don't* get why she moves on.

JARRAH:

Why she *doesn't* move on?

GRACE:

Yeah, she took a HR seminar on sexual harassment.

SUE:

But like, we don't even see them interact that much. You know?

JARRAH:

I love this episode, but the scenes with Nurse Chapel really get to me. She's like *crying* and he is like "It is undignified for a woman to serve a man who is not hers" or something? Or "a man when she is not his" or her- like basically something that's like "Unless we're married and she's my property, she can't serve me." And then she's still like, instead of being like "Wow, that's super gross. I am a qualified competent professional." She's just like *\*breathy voice\** "You want me to make soup? I would *love* to make you soup."

GRACE:

Sweet Jesus.

ANDI:

But she gets so excited when he's like "You can make me soup if you want." *\*all laugh\**

JARRAH:

Yeah. Exactly.

ANDI:

Didn't Majel Barret like say some-

JARRAH:

Yeah. She said she wasn't really in love with Chapel and the character, and she felt she was kind of pathetic.

ANDI:

*\*laughs\** Poor Chapel. Not even the person playing her thought she- *\*laughs\** Oh gosh, that's so sad. She could have been way awesomer than she was.

JARRAH:

Of course. Oh, and the part where McCoy is like "You made him soup. You never quit do you?" or *\*laughs\** whatever he says. Basically like *\*condescending voice\** "Awww. Look at the little girl who's in love with the Vulcan who doesn't love her back."

ANDI:

Yeah it's- I feel bad for her.

JARRAH:

Oh me too.

GRACE:

We've all been there Christine, we've all been there.

JARRAH:

At one point she does get to teach Uhura how to read. A different episode, I'm just saying-in the course of her thing.\*Andi laughs\*

GRACE:

Wait wait, what?

ANDI:

\*laughs\* This is the high point for Chapel?

SUE:

It's so much that her motivation is like, seeking after a guy. She stopped medical school to go after her fiancée, and now she is pining over Spock and spending all her time making soup apparently. Just- no.

GRACE:

God, can you imagine what her livejournal must have looked like? \*all laugh\* Good Lord.

ANDI:

She's not the only one. There's this part where Spock is like "I'm sad" and he sits in the corner and plays his little like- I don't know what that is. Like, a ukulele lute thing. \*Jarrah laughs\* By himself in the corner. Just like \*music noises\* plinkity-plink.

JARRAH:

It has an actual name but it- there is a Vulcan harp *app*.

ANDI:

Yeah. But I did notice that he does sit in his room, and it's all dimmed, and he just sits in the corner.\*laughs\* So that's pretty emo too, to be fair. Nurse Chapel is not the only emo in this episode.

GRACE:

She's just on livejournal, he's on soundcloud.

JARRAH:

It's just called the Vulcan *lute*. Yeah it's the giant stick things that they fight each other with that I think are called the *lirpa*.

SUE:

Yeah. Straight out of Futurama.

ANDI:

Oh yeah. Or rather-



JARRAH:

They're like the way more badass versions of the Anbo-jyutsu weapons in the Icarus factor.

ANDI:

I love that though, because they are like- they fight, and then they yell like hurt feelings at each other, and then they fight some more. That's the best scene. \*Jarrah laughs\* Like "You were never there for me as a child!" \*laughs\* And then he hits him in the face with a stick! Great.

GRACE:

Wonder what Freud would say about that?

JARRAH:

\*laughs\* Well this fight scene, I think, is significantly better. The music is iconic in Trek, and it's like- Oh right! So I don't think we explained how this happens.

SUE:

\*starts scatting the Star Trek fight music\*

JARRAH:

\*laughs\* Exactly.

GRACE:

Again, this is a very musical episode.

JARRAH:

So T'Pring, Spock's fiancée wife situation, \*Andi laughs\* basically wants to marry this other dude with a very tiny forehead called Stonn. And she's like "Alright, I don't want to marry Spock. So I am calling this rite where I can have a challenger challenge Spock and fight to the death. But it can be anyone, for some reason. It doesn't have to be the guy that I want to marry." And he's like "What? I would totally win! I totally want to fight Spock!" and she's like "Nope. Kirk. Kirk should fight Spock." And so that's how that arises.

ANDI:

My favorite moment for her is when Spock goes to ring the gong or whatever and she just puts her hand out and was like "No." It's so cool looking. Fun fact about Stonn, also from These Are The Voyages and also inappropriate background notes, is that apparently his original name was *Spore*. \*all laugh\*

GRACE:

Woow!

ANDI:

They actually had like these memos back and forth like “We can’t have his name be Spore.” \*Jarrah laughs\* And nobody knew how to tell Theodore Sturgeon that they needed to change the name from Spore, because it was too, you know, close to other names. \*all laugh\* And so they basically wrote him a letter. It was like “We like this draft, but we think we need to change the name of Spore to something less suggestive.” \*all laugh\* Oh I just love a lot of these memos because it just goes to show that the background notes on Star Trek is- \*laughs\* they were just like us guys. Laughing at the name *Spore*.

SUE:

\*laughs\* I love that T’Pring can make this challenge, and like choose a champion that she prefers. But what I really hated is that T’Pau right there is like “Well, you understand that whoever wins, you’re going to become the property of the victor.” \*all make noises of discomfort\*

GRACE:

Vulcan has not moved up on its phrasing and language scale, I guess. They’re evolved in every other capacity. Not so much in the delicately wording one.

ANDI:

See, this is such a weird thing to me. Because on the one hand, you have two really strong willed women here. That are both apparently okay with this ritual that is really heavily weighted towards the man. And actually, that’s kind of the point of what T’Pring is doing, is she’s trying to manipulate this system that really doesn’t work well for her in a way that she can get what she wants.

JARRAH:

Absolutely.

SUE:

Yeah. She’s doing the best she can with the system that’s in place. But it’s just a pretty terrible system. And I mean we’ve talked before about how, you know, people accuse Kirk of being the womanizer, but it’s really Spock who says all the misogynistic things on the show.

ANDI:

Maybe this is why. Because of Vulcans.

SUE:

Right?

GRACE:

Frickin’ Vulcans, man.

JARRAH:

We had a listener comment on Facebook from Kathy, who said “There is a discussion in a fanzine back in the 70s of the greatest Trek villain of all time, and T’Pring was at the top of the list. The editor finally stepped in and stated T’Pring was not a villain. I’ve always gotten the impression T’Pring wanted somebody who was not away in Starfleet. The viewer forgets Spock was away in Starfleet. He was not home on Vulcan. That does not make T’Pring a b-word.” I mean, I think that’s part of it. It’s not just that like Spock was away, but like she didn’t have feelings for him and he didn’t even have feelings for her. But she did have feelings for Stonn. And at the end like, she tells- she explains to Spock basically like “I did the only thing I could do in this situation to be with Stonn and to be free.” And he’s basically like “You’re totally logical.”

GRACE:

I love how Spocks not even angry. It’s just like “Oh, well played.”

JARRAH:

Yeah. And she thanks him. Just like, “Thanks for the compliment.” I mean, obviously it’s not cool that she put people’s life in danger. But she didn’t really have another option other than be miserable for the rest of her life because of this weird awful position she was put in by her society.

SUE:

Yeah. I was surprised when I realized there was a negative fan reaction to her, seemingly just for not wanting Spock. Which is silly, and the reasons she gives are totally legitimate. I’m not sure if she mentions that he’s away all the time, but she does mention like she doesn’t want to be in the public eye. Like she would be if they were a couple or married or whatever. And that she has someone there who she actually does want to be with, and he wants to be with her. And they don’t even really know each other that well. I mean, all of these things are legitimate.

JARRAH:

Yeah. Apparently in one of the novels, obviously it’s non-canon, but she like comes back and tries to get revenge on Kirk and Spock because Stonn died.

ANDI:

Spock’s World!

JARRAH:

Is it Spock’s World?

ANDI:

Yeah, it’s Spock’s World. It’s Diane Duane. It’s so good! \*all cheer\* OK. If you guys have not read Spock’s World, just our listeners, if you haven’t read it, read it. It is so good. Especially like, later on. First of all, T’pring does come back. And she’s more villainous in that version, but it’s kind of like her life has not gone the way she wants, and so she’s kind of bitter. But the whole

book is just really really interesting and it goes into the history of Vulcan, and especially Surak and his philosophy, and how it shaped Vulcan. And it is a top notch book. Definitely read it.

GRACE:

But from the title I can only imagine it's like Wayne's World but with Vulcans.

ANDI:

That's exactly right. \*Jarrah laughs\* Exactly right. And then you know-

GRACE:

\*Spock voice\* Logic time, most excellent. \*Andi laughs\*

JARRAH:

"Party on Spock" "Party on Stonn"

SUE:

\*deadpan\* Logic time. Fascinating. \*all laugh\*

ANDI:

But yeah, it's a great book. So people should check that out for sure.

JARRAH:

Cool. But yeah, Arlene Martel has a quote, she's the actress who played T'Pol, in *These Are The Voyages* saying "I was just caught up in the fervor of it. What it was about, being true to your nature, being true to your impulses, and I was very in tune with that concept. I mean it was the 60s, and there was all this freedom suddenly happening, sexual freedom. And the script was kind of honoring T'Pol as a woman I think. She wasn't taught our cultural thing of, you know, you do as you're told. She was very respectful of who she was. I thought she was very logical and intellectually centered rather than emotionally controlled."

GRACE:

It is pretty cool to see someone just being like "Yeah, I beat the system. That's how I do."

ANDI:

Yeah. And I have a feeling that a lot of reaction to her was probably because of the lack of emotion of the Vulcan women. Because that's something that I think people can accept in men more than they can for women. And DC Fontana actually, also in *These Are The Voyages*. Another book you guys should be reading. Is that she talked a little bit about, you know, we talked about how she was sad that she couldn't keep in *Friday's Child* keeping Julie Newmarr's character kind of manipulative and not so maternal. So, she actually added a lot of that to T'Pol where she was like, and here's the quote from DC Fontana "I put in the fact that she was very calculating, saying 'You'll be gone, I'll still be here, and Stonn will be here' like the Julie Newmarr character in *Friday's child*. But Gene didn't allow it there, so I brought some of that into this one." But yeah. So she actually wanted her to be more calculating because she wanted to

show a different side of femininity. And I think that's cool. But I also think that's why T'Pring got the reaction she did. Or at least one of the reasons. And I see her as an antagonist but not a villain.

SUE:

She's just an INTJ. \*all laugh\*

GRACE:

She's got her reasons.

ANDI:

But I *do not* understand why anyone would want Stonn over Spock. He's weird. And I don't like his face.

GRACE:

She really digs tiny foreheads.

ANDI:

I *guess*.

GRACE:

Likes em small. \*Andi laughs\*

JARRAH:

Another non-canon thing from post-this episode which I recommend is there's a series of the DC Star Trek novels called Rivals, which is Volume 2 issue sixty six to sixty eight. If anyone's interested. Which is- T'Pring has basically like had a child with Stonn, but then she sort of feels a calling to go live as a priestess, and she leaves Stonn and the baby. And then Stonn is like dying, and him and Spock had this kind of reckoning about how the whole situation was tied up in basically toxic masculinity. \*laughs\* Which is kind of-

GRACE:

Daaang!

JARRAH:

It's kind of a theme of this episode, because you've got like Spock is like throwing soup at a woman who's trying to be nice because he can't handle expressing his feelings. And like, it does kind of show that, you know, the danger of these masculine tropes and gender roles. So Stonn in this comic series basically is like "I always felt kind of emasculated" he doesn't use that word but that's basically what he's saying "because T'Pring assumed I couldn't win that fight. And so she chose Kirk and like, it always made me feel that I wasn't as good as you, because she thought I couldn't win a fight against you." And they're basically like "OK, that's pretty ridiculous right?" He's like "Yeah, I'm totally dying though." And also their daughter is like a cool computer

hacker. So anyway, I recommend that comic book series. It introduces Stonn's second wife as well, who's a pretty cool lady, and like a lot of really complex characters for like a three book arc.

ANDI:

That sounds awesome, but I'm sorry Stonn, you couldn't have won against Spock. So, sorry.

GRACE:

No, probably not. For one thing he's got the power of main primary character on his side. \*Andi laughs\* So the odds are just kind of set against him already.

SUE:

Plus we did just see him smash that cardboard prop in his quarters. \*all laugh\*

ANDI:

\*laughs\* I love that scene. \*Sue laughs\* I love it. I love his little tantrums! I think they're so funny. He's just like \*angry wail\* and he just hits it for no reason. Uhura is not saying anything that would make him angry. He's just like "Stop talking to me!" and destroying things.

JARRAH:

Maybe Kylo Ren was experiencing Pon farr. \*all laugh\*

GRACE:

Oh if you're semantic looking, and in space, and single you know it's coming.

JARRAH:

Oh no! Throwing tantrums. Anyway \*trails off\*

ANDI:

So we talked a little bit about T'Pring manipulating the situation, and the situation ends up being \*dramatic voice\* Kirk versus Spock! Dun dun dun!

GRACE:

\*segues into singing the fight music\* De de de de de de de de de de de. \*all laugh\* I had to keep it going.

JARRAH:

Yep. Every time we talk about Kirk fighting, that's the theme.

ANDI:

So this is one of those big draws of the episode actually, is people really interested to see who would win in a fight Kirk v Spock. Personally I'd always put my money on Spock but that's just me. Well I mean, he destroyed that supposedly metal thing with his bare hands. \*laughs\* Plus, I just feel like Spock would be like "OK Kirk, fight me." and then Kirk would fight him, and then Kirk would do a barrel roll, and Spock would nerve pinch him and it'd all be over.

JARRAH:

Yeah. He'd be like "I logic-ed that. Logic-ed the shit out of that." \*Andi laughs\*

GRACE:

As long as Kirk's shirt gets ripped sometime in the process he's probably fine with it.

ANDI:

Again, another spit take moment is when they manage to cut Kirks shirt-

SUE:

*Nipple power!*

ANDI:

-open right at his nipples.

GRACE:

The boob top! Suddenly he has a boob window, \*Andi laughs\* it's amazing.

ANDI:

I always thought that the boob windows are only for women on Star Trek.

GRACE:

No! This episode has a lot of dude boob. \*Jarrah laughs\* I mean, look at T'Paus guards and tell me "Oh my god that is not some serious Nippleage." \*Jarrah laughs\* This is a nipple heavy episode.

ANDI:

\*laughs\* I just- I just think that's so funny. It's *so bleak*. But I do like their fight.

GRACE:

Do you think Shatner put out a memo or something like "Hey my pecs look great this week. Just got em waxed-"

JARRAH:

Well, it was the beginning of the season. Like, they usually found that he would lose a bit of his muscle and gain a bit of weight as the season went on, and it's kind of like gross to read about the memos they were sending about Kirk's weight, and like Shatner had to crash diet and stuff. But this was the first episode in Season 2. I don't know if it was *filmed* first but- I don't think it was, but it was very early on so he had been getting ready.

ANDI:

That makes me sad. That's not pressure that anybody wants to be under.

SUE:

Yeah that's super gross.

ANDI:

And chubby Kirk is cute. Anyways-

GRACE:

It's true, yeah.

ANDI:

The fight is good though. \*fighting noises\* Rawr rar rar. They have big sticks with the like ginkgo leaves knives on the end. They hit each other with it. It's pretty great.

JARRAH:

And then there's like a- where does the belt kind of situation- massive rope come in?

ANDI:

I don't know, but I like it.

GRACE:

Oh my gosh. Like, the whippy rope thing? \*Sue laughs\* What is that?

ANDI:

It looks like a hose. \*Sue laughs\*

JARRAH:

Like, it's long and flat. Like it looks like some kind of mechanical belt or hose.

ANDI:

One of my favorite parts is when Kirk picks it up and he looks at it like "huh?" \*all laugh\*

GRACE:

"What the hell is this?"

ANDI:

Spock was actually like, you know, getting ready to fight with it and clearly knows what it is and stuff, but Kirk's like "What am I supposed to do with this?" \*laughs\*

JARRAH:

So when do you think that McCoy gets his idea? Because he wasn't expecting any of this when he came down to the planet. But he just kind of like, pops up in the middle of the thing and is like "I need to inject Kirk with something because the air is too thin here" and T'Pol's basically like "Nope, you've got to suck it up." And he's like "But it's not fair." And she goes "Oh, OK fine."



And the thing he injects him with is the thing that eventually makes him- mimics death. Like, how soon did McCoy know that was going to happen?

GRACE:

Oh, McCoy just always has one of those up his sleeve. Just in case.

ANDI:

I feel like he just always has a bunch of shots ready to go for any situation.

GRACE:

\*singing Shots by LMFAO\* Shots shots shots shots shots shots.

SUE:

But why? Why would you even bring that? \*all laugh\*

GRACE:

"Why do you even have that shot, man?"

ANDI:

I'm telling you, he brings it all the time. We just don't know it, because he's never used it before. He always has something.

SUE:

Like, to his best friend's wedding.

ANDI:

Exactly. Exactly!

GRACE:

He's actually just got a bandolier of shots and hypo-sprays under his shirt.

ANDI:

He's got all sorts of stuff and, you know, you never know when you're gonna need it. Maybe next time Kirk and Spock are inevitably in jail and need to be broken out, you know, McCoy will have the right hypo spray just on his belt ready to go.

JARRAH:

Maybe you'll be in the 24th century and you'll have to observe a death match between Yar and a woman on the Lagonian homeworld, and you'll need to replicate the exact same situation.

SUE:

\*laughs\* I was thinking that exact same thing.

GRACE:

Maybe you'll need to go to San Francisco and regrow someone's kidney. You never know!

ANDI:

That's true Sue, your favorite part.

SUE:

He regrew the kidney with a pill!

ANDI:

Ah yes, but he still had it on his person. Did he not?

GRACE:

Why did he even have that pill?

JARRAH:

Yes!

ANDI:

See?

GRACE:

Again, it's like "Well Jim I'd rather have it not need it then need it not have it." \*Jarrah laughs\*

ANDI:

I feel like he must have one of those Hermione bags that's like bigger on the inside, and so he's got like all of his medical supplies in this tiny little pouch at his belt.

JARRAH:

The med kit of holding.

ANDI:

\*laughs\* Exactly.

JARRAH:

So he does that. And then Spock strangles Kirk to fake death, and then he's not really dead, but then Spock has that awesome exchange with T'Pol where he says how logical she was.

ANDI:

Which is really the highest compliment Spock has to give. He's like "Worthy opponent."

GRACE:

Pretty much.

JARRAH:

No like “Exceptionally logical... for a woman.”

ANDI:

Yeah. No. None of that.

GRACE:

No. No, he’s straight up impressed.

ANDI:

I think he said something like “Eminently logical.” It's pretty good. And, you know, at the time he's like real sad because he just murdered Kirk, or he thinks he did, and he's still holding it together.

JARRAH:

Yeah. The line where T’Pau’s like “Live long and prosper Spock” and he's like “I shall do neither. I've killed my captain and my friend.” One of the best pieces of dialogue in the series.

ANDI:

And he delivers it so perfectly.

GRACE:

I really hope that like a week later though T’Pring sends him an email like \*sympathetically\* “So how you holding up?” and he's like “Oh wasn't dead at all!” “Whaaaaat?!” I want to see the IM exchange that happens after this.

ANDI:

Yeah, absolutely. Obviously Kirk becomes rather famous after this, so I feel like both T’Pau and T’Pring are gonna figure out that he is not dead but-

JARRAH:

I feel like Spock is probably like at this point just like taking selfies of how happy he is and like how logically he is doing. \*Andi laughs\* And then he's like posting them on Facebook.

GRACE:

“Doing great *without you.*” \*Sue laughs\*

ANDI:

Seriously though.

GRACE:

Can bring us to that great final scene though? Of Spock discovering that Kirk is *alive!* And getting super psyched about it!

ANDI:

Yeah. I really-

GRACE:

And it's the cutest damn thing!

ANDI:

I really can't say enough about Leonard Nimoy in this like last five minutes. Because he does this amazing stoicism, but you can just see the complete heartbreak underneath it. And then to do that 180 and then the- you know the famous moment when he realizes that Kirk is alive and he's just like "Jim!" and it's *so sweet* but not-

GRACE:

\*As Spock "Jim!"

ANDI:

Like, it should be really cheesy and maybe it is. I don't know, maybe it's cheesy. But I just- it every single time I'm like \*emotional noises\* I know, but it's so good.

GRACE:

It's good cheesy.

ANDI:

I forgive it because it's so good.

JARRAH:

It is so good. And Chapel's like "There's still hope!"

ANDI:

\*laughs\* But there isn't. Did she not see the look on Spock's face?

ALL:

No.

ANDI:

I feel like *that moment* more than anything else is what ends up in the YouTube clips when Kirk and Spock shippers are like "See! they're in love." It's like "Jim!" Poor Chapel.

JARRAH:

It's really really sweet. I love that. And then also how like Bones gets in on kind of ribbing him. "Oh, you were gonna be emotional!" and he's just like "grr..no!"

ANDI:

\*angry\* "I just appreciate Kirk's skills as a captain! Come on." \*all laugh\*

JARRAH:

"I'm just glad I'm not getting court martialed."

GRACE:

"The important thing is that no one died."

ANDI:

So yeah. That's the episode of Amok Time.

GRACE:

And it let fan girl's imaginations run amuck.

ANDI:

Actually one of the fan letters that was included in These Are The Voyages is one from a young woman who was like "Don't let that Vulcan lady stay, because Spock is mine." is basically what the gist of that letter was. And I get that. You want Spock to remain- you want to have hope like Christine chapel, that maybe Spock will one day realize that you and only you are his one true love.

GRACE:

\*dreamy voice\* Maybe you can cross the boundaries between fiction and reality and make all of your dreams come true.

ANDI:

If that can happen I would freak out.

GRACE:

If that could happen I wouldn't be here doing a podcast, I tell you what.

JARRAH:

Yeah. I'm looking forward to later, at some point we're gonna do an episode on Vulcan women, and look at sort of the evolution over time. Because we get a lot more backstory. We get to see T'Pol more in Enterprise. We also get to see T'Pol in Next Generation in Datas poker game, am I right? She's like clearly a legendary character whose reputation lives on for centuries. So that's pretty cool. And it's interesting, yeah, to look at that whole thing about "How are women treated in a supposedly logical society." And that kind of disconnect there. Which clearly in this case is somewhat deliberate because they're trying to show like this whole process is totally illogical. But it relies on the fact that like, during the times that they're not in Pon farr they're still upholding the system.

SUE:

So here's the thing about T'Pol, right? Because I'm a little bit confused. In this episode we are given this backstory, I guess, of the Vulcan culture where these children are paired up in arranged marriages from the time that they're really really young. So it seems like what's being

presented is that everyone pairs off in Vulcan Society. And it's really really rare for somebody to be a single adult-

ANDI:

And also Sue, remember everybody is straight.

SUE:

\*laughs\* Right. Because everybody is straight in the future.

ANDI:

\*sarcastic\* I mean that's obvious.

GRACE:

Even in space...

SUE:

But we're also informed, basically, by Spock that every woman on Vulcan is subservient to her man, \*bitterly\* of course. But then we have T'Pol, who is super respected by Kirk and the Federation, and the matriarch of this family, and kind of a big deal, who is leading this wedding ceremony and there's no real explanation of that. Is it that she's one of the few people on Vulcan who did remain single? Is it that she only has power now that she's maybe a widow? Or is she just so amazing that she has broken out of these trappings that the culture puts her in that doesn't let her do anything? And we're not given that information. And that's, I think, really unfortunate. But of course, you know, this Vulcan culture was not planned out like Lord of the Rings or Game of Thrones. This was year two of a space western. So who knew there was going to be *so much* mythology built upon this? But still, what we get even within the episode the pieces don't necessarily fit together. And that's the thing I'm a little bit disappointed with. I wish we just knew more about it and I wish that when you put those puzzle pieces together that the Vulcan culture made a little bit more sense.

ANDI:

That's exactly what I was thinking. I was like "If you make it so women can only be free if their husband is dead, and you have like a logical race of women, there's gonna be a lot of murder." \*laughs\* There is gonna be *a lot* of murder.

JARRAH:

Yeah. So like, there's the line that Spock has to Chapel earlier is that "It is undignified for a woman to play servant to a man who is not hers." Which implies it's okay *if they're married*. I guess if you're "playing" and everything is consensual, cool. But like-

ANDI:

I will say that although Spock's World is not canon, they do go into this whole arranged marriage thing more deeply. So it's kind of- because Spock's World is like two things. So one is Kirk and McCoy and Spock in the present. And then every alternating chapter is like the history of

Vulcan. So they have a lot of different viewpoint characters throughout history on Vulcan showing how these sorts of things come to be. And it's super interesting, but again it's not canon. So I don't know that we can use it as a way to bridge some of these problems.

JARRAH:

Yeah, I don't know. I mean, I think we got a lot more in Enterprise. But because Enterprise is a prequel, you know, if we consider just Amok Time going *forward* in the chronology, and only consider what's given to us from canon, there just isn't a lot there. We don't even really need a lot of other Vulcan women. We have like Tuvok's wife, sort of in flashbacks? Am I missing someone obvious?

ANDI:

Besides T'Pol?

JARRAH:

Yeah. So we have like the Priestess and Saavik. So I mean, Saavik indicates like- she sort of implies that it's okay to be single, a Vulcan woman serving in Starfleet. So that's kind of cool.

GRACE:

We've also got Valeris.

JARRAH:

Oh right. Yeah. So we do see some examples but it doesn't- you know, no one really says "Hey how do these things work together?" Anyway, it's interesting.

ANDI:

That'll be fun to dive into more in-depth.

JARRAH:

Do we have to do our ratings for this episode?

ANDI:

Oh shoot! I didn't even think of that. How are we doing ratings? We were making phrases right?

JARRAH:

It's "Set phasers to something."

GRACE:

I set phasers to "Aggressively ringing bells." \*Andi laughs\*

JARRAH:

I set phasers to "A nice warm satisfying bowl of plomeek soup." Because it is comforting and gives me happy feels.

SUE:

\*to the tune of the Waynes World theme\* Spock's world! Amok time! Excellent! \*laughs\* Logical!

ANDI:

I'm thinking, give me a minute.

GRACE:

So, set phasers to "Broken lirpa?" \*Jarrah laughs\* Which sounds like a code phrase doesn't it?  
\*dramatic voice\* Operation broken lirpa.

ANDI:

I set phasers to "Kirk's boob window." \*all laugh\* Sorry. I was thinking about doing "Kirk's hero worship of T'Pol." But yeah, no. I set phasers to "Kirk's opportune boob window."

JARRAH:

You could also just Set phasers to \*excited\* "Jim!" \*all laugh\*

GRACE:

\*adoring\* "Jim!"

ANDI:

All right. Anything else we want to say about Amok Time?

JARRAH:

It's good. It's good.

GRACE:

It's Pon Farr-licious.

ANDI:

\*laughs\* Pon farr-licious?! \*all laugh\* Alrighty. It was great sharing our chat about Amok Time with you, but this is just one of the many topics being discussed on the Trek.F.M. network. So here's a quick look at some of the other things you may have missed elsewhere on Trek.F.M.

\*Trek.F.M. bumper\*

ANDI:

We also wanted to let you know about the Trek.F.M. Patreon. Trek.F.M. is a listener supported network. You can help us keep the Star Trek discussion coming by pledging a donation at [Patreon.com/TrekFM](https://Patreon.com/TrekFM). That's P A T R E O N.com/TrekFM. Every little bit helps keep the Women at Warp and the other Trek.F.M. podcasts up and running. So once you're done with the show, again, please consider hopping over to [Patreon.com/TrekFM](https://Patreon.com/TrekFM), and again if you'd like to support Women At Warp directly you can visit our patron at [WWW.Patreon.com/womenatwarp](https://WWW.Patreon.com/womenatwarp). So Sue, where can people find you elsewhere on the Internet?



SUE:

Yeah. You can find me writing blogs and doing more podcasts over at [anomalypodcast.com](http://anomalypodcast.com) or on Twitter @Spaltor. That's S P A L T O R.

ANDI:

And Grace, how do people track you down to talk about murder?

GRACE:

You can find me on Twitter @Bonecrusherjenk, or you can read my writing on the Mythcreants blog, or listen to my other star trek podcasting on the archives of All Things Trek.

ANDI:

And Jarrah? How about you?

JARRAH:

You can find me on Twitter @Jarrahpenguin and on Tumblr at [Trekkiefeminist.Tumblr.com](http://Trekkiefeminist.Tumblr.com). And a bunch of us are also doing blocks of episodes of the Trek.F.M. rewatch podcast for the fiftieth anniversary of Star Trek, called From There To Here. Basically, the network is going through and different hosts are watching blocks of episodes, and we're covering two episodes a day. So throughout this year celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of Star Trek, we're going to cover all of the 700 odd episodes of Star Trek. And they're short little episodes. And so my first block with Trek.F.M. host Will Ngyuen of Enterprise episodes is coming up starting January 22nd. And I think Sue has one really soon too right?

SUE:

Yeah. I'm actually doing some episodes with Will as well. They have two blocks of Enterprise episodes coming up, and the first of which I believe starts on February 2nd. So it's gonna be a lot of fun and a lot of Star Trek.

ANDI:

And I'm Andi. You can find me most easily on Twitter @firsttimetrek where I'm live tweeting my first time through Star Trek, and you can also take a look at my tumblr archives at [firsttimetrek.Tumblr.com](http://firsttimetrek.Tumblr.com). Thanks so much for listening!