

THE CAGE



Pilot

(This episode was split to be featured as a part of the two-segment story "The Menagerie," which aired November 17 and 24, 1966)

Written by..... Gene Roddenberry
Directed by..... Robert Butler
Associate Producer..... Byron Haskin
Director of Photography.....
William E. Snyder
Camera Operator..... Gerry Finnerman
Art Directors..... Franz Bachelin,
Pato Guzman
Asst. Art Director..... Walter Jefferies
Costume Design..... William Theiss
Special Effects..... Joe Lombardi
Property Master..... Jack Briggs
Makeup..... Fred B. Phillips
Music..... William Theiss

Cast

Captain Christopher Pike..... Jeffrey
Hunter
Mr. Spock..... Leonard Nimoy
Jose "Joe" Tyler..... Peter Duryea
Number One..... Majel Barrett
(credited as M. Leigh Hudec)
CPO Garrison..... Adam Roarke
Dr. Phillip Boyce..... John Hoyt
Yeoman J.M. Colt..... Laurel Goodwin
Geologist..... Ed Madden
Transporter Chief Pitcairn.. Clegg Hoyt
Dr. Theodore Haskins..... Jon Lormer
Second Survivor..... Leonard Mudie
Third Survivor..... Anthony Jochim
Vina..... Susan Oliver
The Keeper..... Meg Wylie
First Talosian..... Georgia Schmidt
Second Talosian..... Serena Sand

Orion Space Officer.... Robert Phillips
Orion Trader..... Joseph Mell
Hunter's Double..... Bob Herron

The Enterprise, under the command of Captain Christopher Pike, is heading for the nearest starbase for rest and recreation. On Rigel VII, one of their landing parties was attacked, and Pike is feeling depressed about it. He blames himself for not having appraised the situation better. An eighteen-year-old distress signal is received from Talos IV, and survivors are confirmed. Pike orders the ship to detour to pick them up.

The landing party, which consists of Pike, Boyce (the ship's doctor) Spock and security guards, beams down to discover a small colony of humans



Vina, as a green Orion slave girl, played by Susan Oliver, struts her stuff.

living in shanties and tents. Their leader is Theodore Haskins, of the American Continental Institute, and among their numbers is Vina. She is young and beautiful, and was born just before the ACI ship landed. Pike is smitten with Vina, and she leads him away from the rest of his party. A rock wall slides open and two huge-headed aliens stun the captain, then drag him into their chambers behind the "rock."

The "survivors" vanish before Spock and navigator Tyler's eyes, leaving blank rocks. They also spot Pike disappearing into the mountain. This is clearly a trap designed to snare Pike, and their weapons have no effect on the rock. Pike awakens later in what is some form of menagerie. A Keeper appears, amused and somewhat contemp-

tuous of Pike. It can read his primitive mind and project illusions to him. Vina is not one of them, though—she's as real as he is. The Keeper punishes Pike by projecting an illusion of Hell, demonstrating what the Talosian power can do. Pike, furious, tries to attack the Keeper, who finds he cannot read the captain's mind through driving, primitive rage.

The Keeper projects an illusion of Rigel VII starring Pike and Vina. When a warrior attacks, she persuades Pike to cooperate rather than suffer. He beats the attacker, then collapses as the illusion evaporates. Meanwhile, on the orbiting Enterprise, Spock and the emotionless Number One train the ship's laser cannon on the alien mountain. After blasting away at it, there is

no apparent damage. Is it indestructible? Or is it merely another illusion? Pike and Vina (now "picnicking") talk, and Pike realizes that the aliens live vicariously through the illusions that they project from the minds of their specimens. They want Pike and Vina to provide them with a whole line of humans to play with.

When he fails to respond, Pike is transmuted to the role of an Orion trader, and Vina a green-skinned dancing girl who bewitches him. On the Enterprise, Number One, Spock and Yeoman Colt (the captain's secretary) prepare to beam down, but only the two women go—straight into Pike's cell. The Keeper has brought them to give Pike more breeding choices! He suggests either the cold, emotionless Number



One or the more nubile and alluring Colt. Vina is furious. So is Pike, who manages to get the jump on the Keeper by masking his thoughts with primitive emotions.

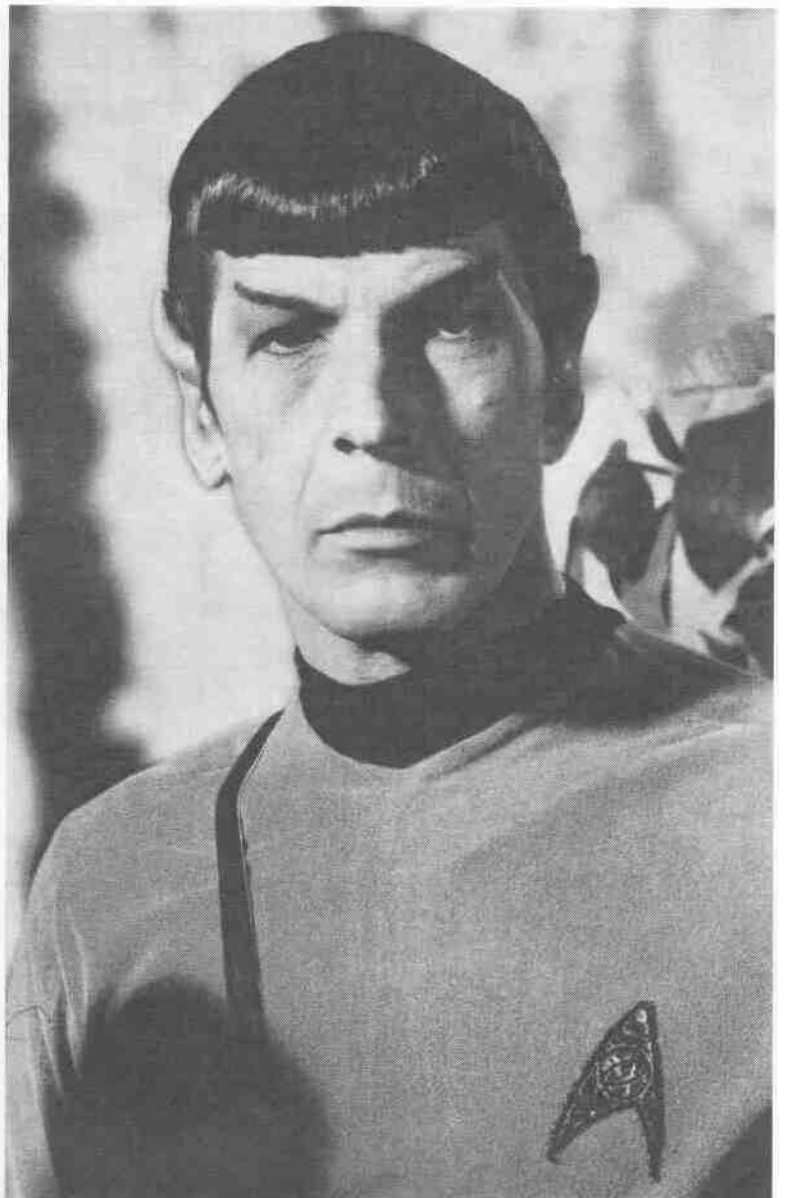
With a firm grip on the alien, despite his shape-shifting, Pike threatens him with one of the "useless" weapons. He believes the lasers still work, and that their effects are just being kept from his mind. The four humans manage to escape to the surface with the Keeper, exactly where the Keeper wanted them. He aims to leave them to get on with their lives. But Number One sets her laser on overload—the humans opt to kill themselves rather than breed playthings for the Talosians. The aliens realize that the humans mean business, and agree to free them.

Vina, however, will not leave. It turns out that the Talosians rescued her from the ACI ship's crash, but couldn't put her body back together properly. She is in reality hunched and ugly, and it is only their powers of illusion that make her look as she should. Pike asks the Keeper to leave her that, but in a burst of generosity the alien does more—it projects an illusory Pike to remain with her in her exile. Pike beams back to the Enterprise and recommends that Talos IV be placed on a list of planets to be avoided in the future.

The pilot dealt with interesting ideas—how do we know what we see and feel is real, and not simply a very

tangible illusion? The Talosians can project anything they desire, and none of the humans can really trust their eyes. Even Vina, the one real thing apart from the Talosians on the planet, is not exactly what she seems.

NBC considered the story too cerebral to grab an audience, even though it was quite an old-hat sf idea. has a fascination with superior alien races whose telepathic or mental prowess is beyond our own—he used the concept far too frequently in the first season of the resulting series. The story is a good showcase for the characters, though, as we are presented with the ongoing situation neatly. Pike, the captain with a vulnerable heart, is torn between love (Colt) and duty (Number One). His integrated ship



consists of numerous human types and the virtually inhuman Spock.

Spock here is much as we are, without the later appeal to logic and emotionless response (that was the prerogative of Number One in this script). His eyebrows are bushier than they later became, but his ears are just as pointy. The network hated the character and demanded he be dropped. Roddenberry refused, but did downgrade his role slightly for the first few stories. NBC had an eye for un-faillingly picking a hit—then trying to axe it. Spock rapidly became the most popular member of the team, with a huge number of letters pouring in for Nimoy each week.

Roddenberry had no doubt that he would keep Spock—the lonely alien

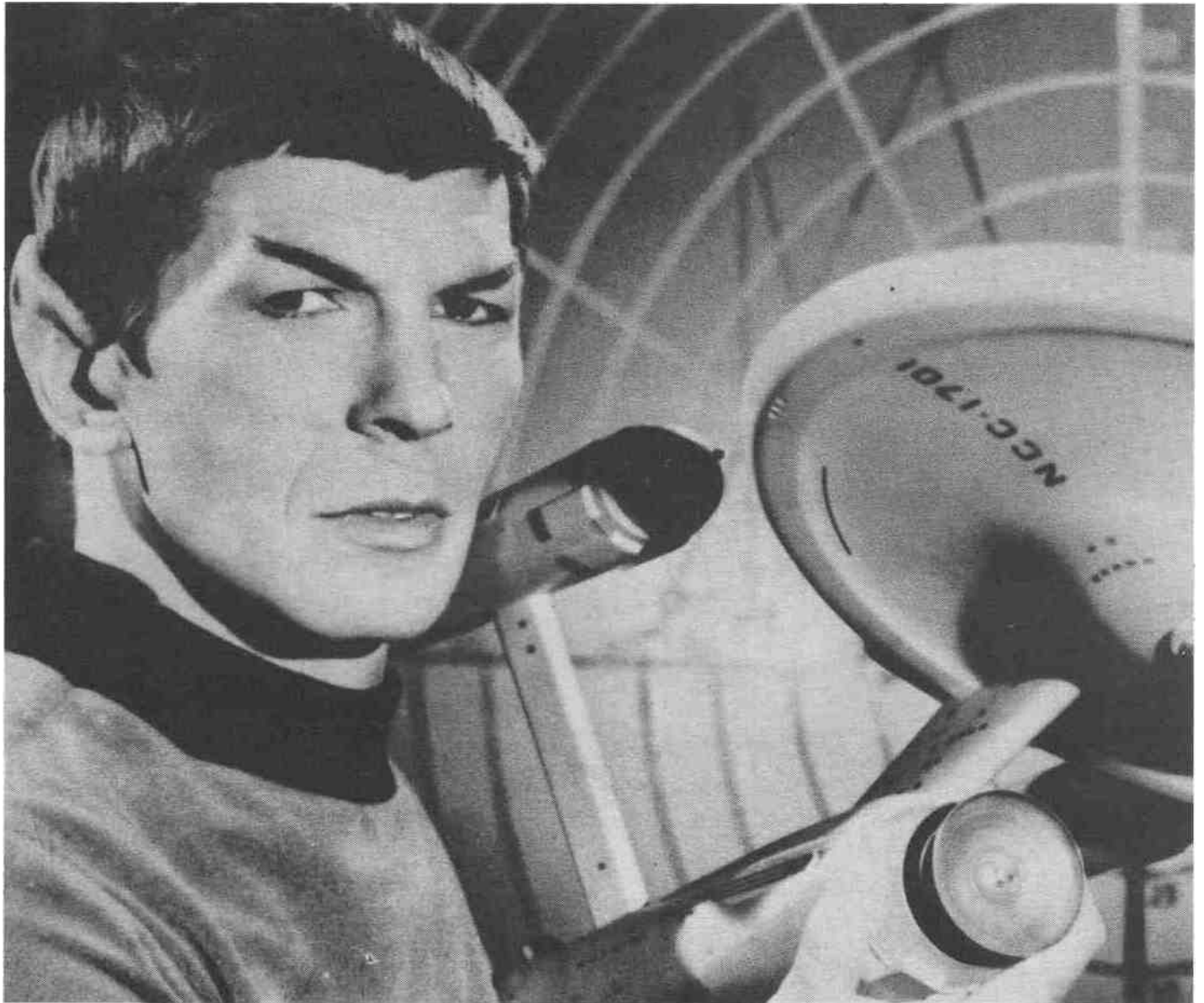
figure, somewhat tragic in his self-imposed isolation, appealed to him. I can't help but wonder if he saw something of himself in Spock, since he later cast his wife as Spock's impossible love interest!

Majel Barrett appeared in this story as M. Leigh Hudec, playing the emotionless Number One. When ordered to drop her, Roddenberry married her instead, then signed her back on later as Christine Chapel!

Jeffrey Hunter, a very promising young actor, was excellent as the captain, though in this grim story he had little to play with. He's a very convincing homicidal maniac, however! Sadly, he could not return for the second pilot, and Roddenberry rewrote and recast the captain.

Peter Duryea is the son of actor Dan Duryea, and appeared in small roles on numerous tv shows in the Sixties. John Hoyt had previously been cast as a doctor on the comedy **Tom, Dick and Mary** (1963-64), and currently appears on **Gimme A Break** (1982) reruns. Susan Oliver was a regular on **Peyton Place** (1966). Meg Wyllie was a regular on **Hennessey** (1959-62) and **The Travels of Jaimie McPheeters** (1963-64).

Though this pilot was rejected, it was salvaged (having cost so much to make, it couldn't simply be forgotten) and spliced into a second framing script to make the two-part first season episode "The Menagerie." That story cleverly used virtually all of the footage from the pilot without making it look silly. When James Blish came along to



turn the stories into books, he retained the plot in its original form and included it in **Star Trek IV**, making the televised version of "The Menagerie" the only **Star Trek** story not transferred to book form.

The episode in its original form still exists, and with the current interest in **Star Trek** may yet be seen. In releasing the episodes on videotape, Columbia is doing a curious thing. They are being issued in batches of ten in their televised order, but are being numbered in **production** order. This makes the second pilot their Tape 2, even though it was fifth in airing order. Will they leave the series with a gap instead of a Number One? Or will they issue "The Cage/The Menagerie" as a special rarity bonus for fans?

Not only the cast but the technical staff for this story was quite different from that of the resulting show. Jerry Finnerman, simply the camera operator for the pilot, so impressed Roddenberry that he was promoted to director of photography for the series, a post he held for two years. "Matt" Jefferies, assistant art director, was promoted for the show to production designer. The theme was written by William Theiss, who also designed the costumes. Theiss remained throughout the run as costume designer, but his score and theme were replaced by the familiar tones of Alexander Courage's music.

Most notably (and generally uncredited), the late Byron Haskin acted as associate producer. Roddenberry

was not familiar with the complex special effects work that would be needed to shoot a space series, but Haskin proved invaluable here. He had directed **War of the Worlds** in 1953, creating the legendary effects for that film which still hold up well today. His other films include **Conquest of Space** (1955), **From the Earth to the Moon** (1958), **Captain Sinbad** (1963) and **Robinson Crusoe on Mars** (1964), wherein he used the model ships from **War of the Worlds** once again.

