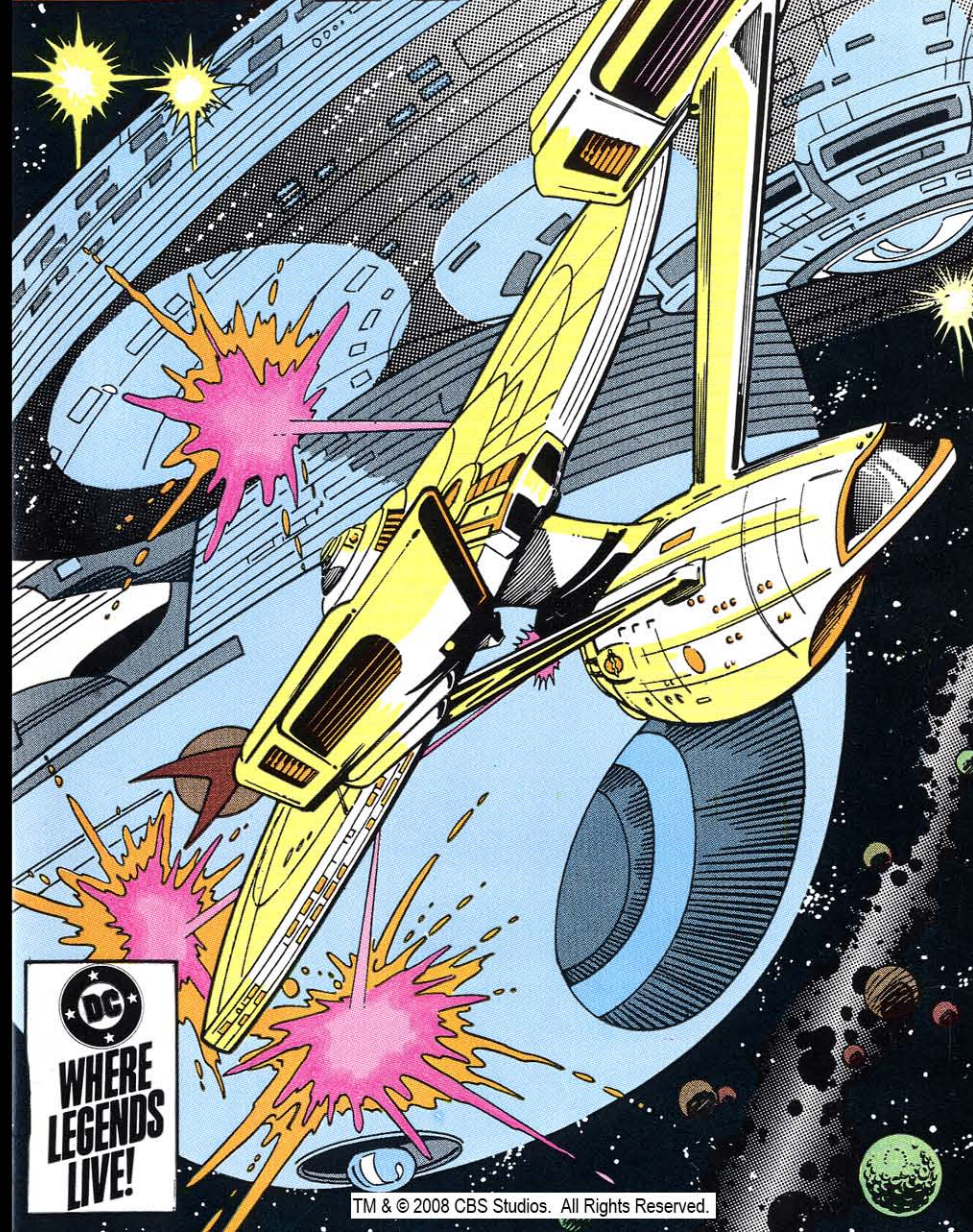




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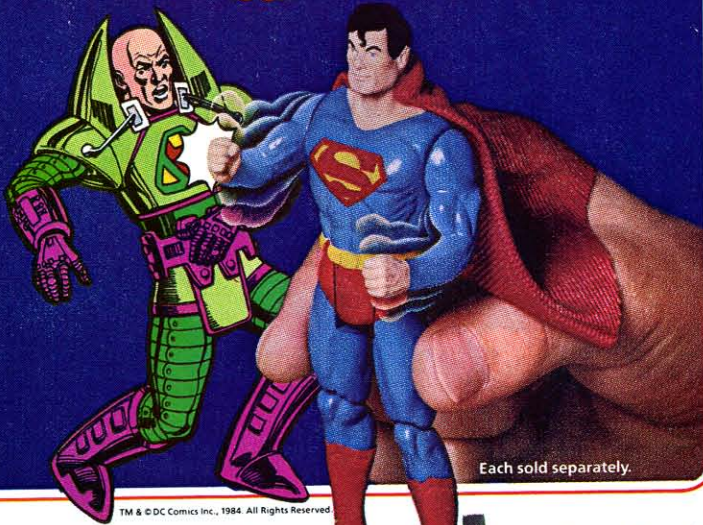
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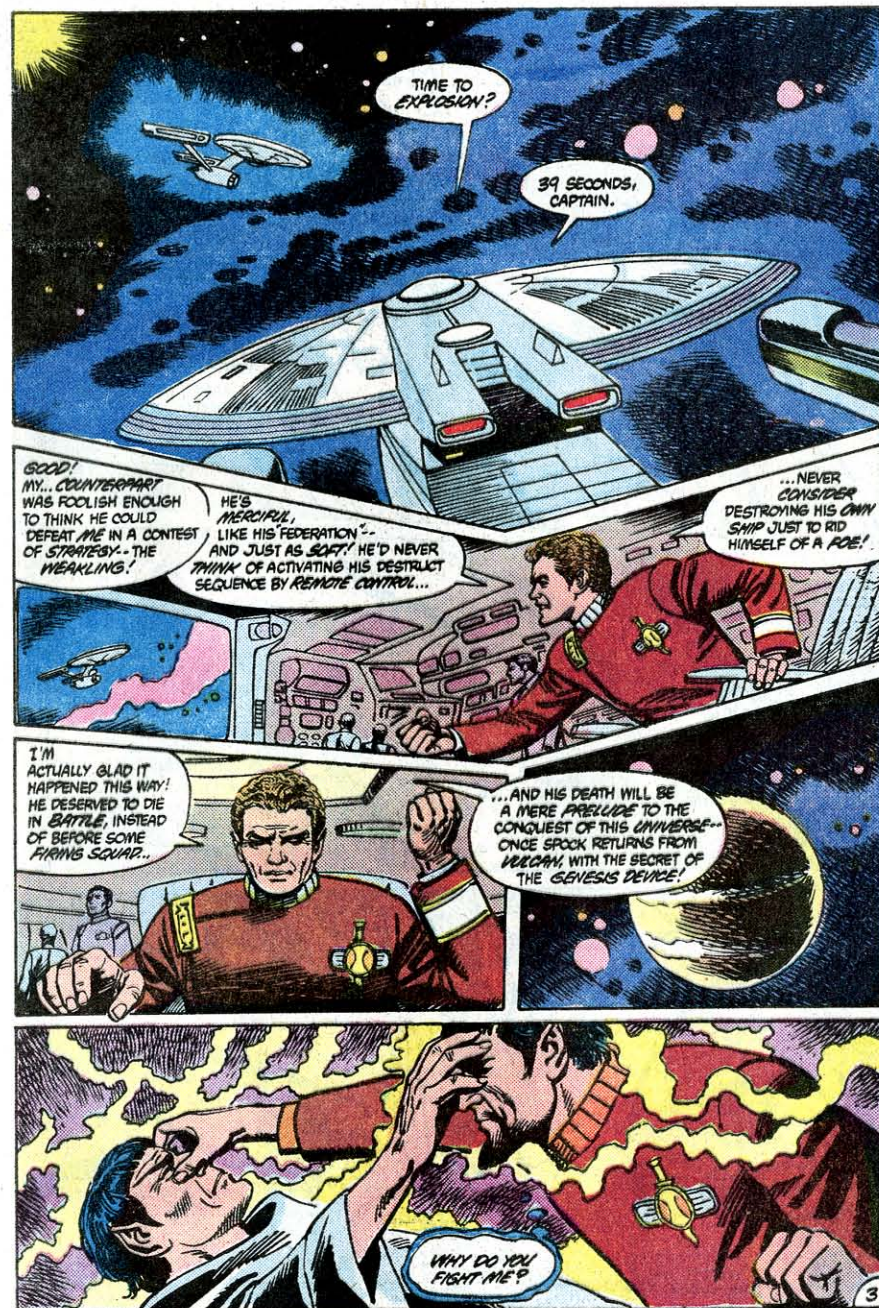
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Tom Sutton & Ricardo Villagran Artists
John Costanza Letterer
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Mary Wolfman Co-editor

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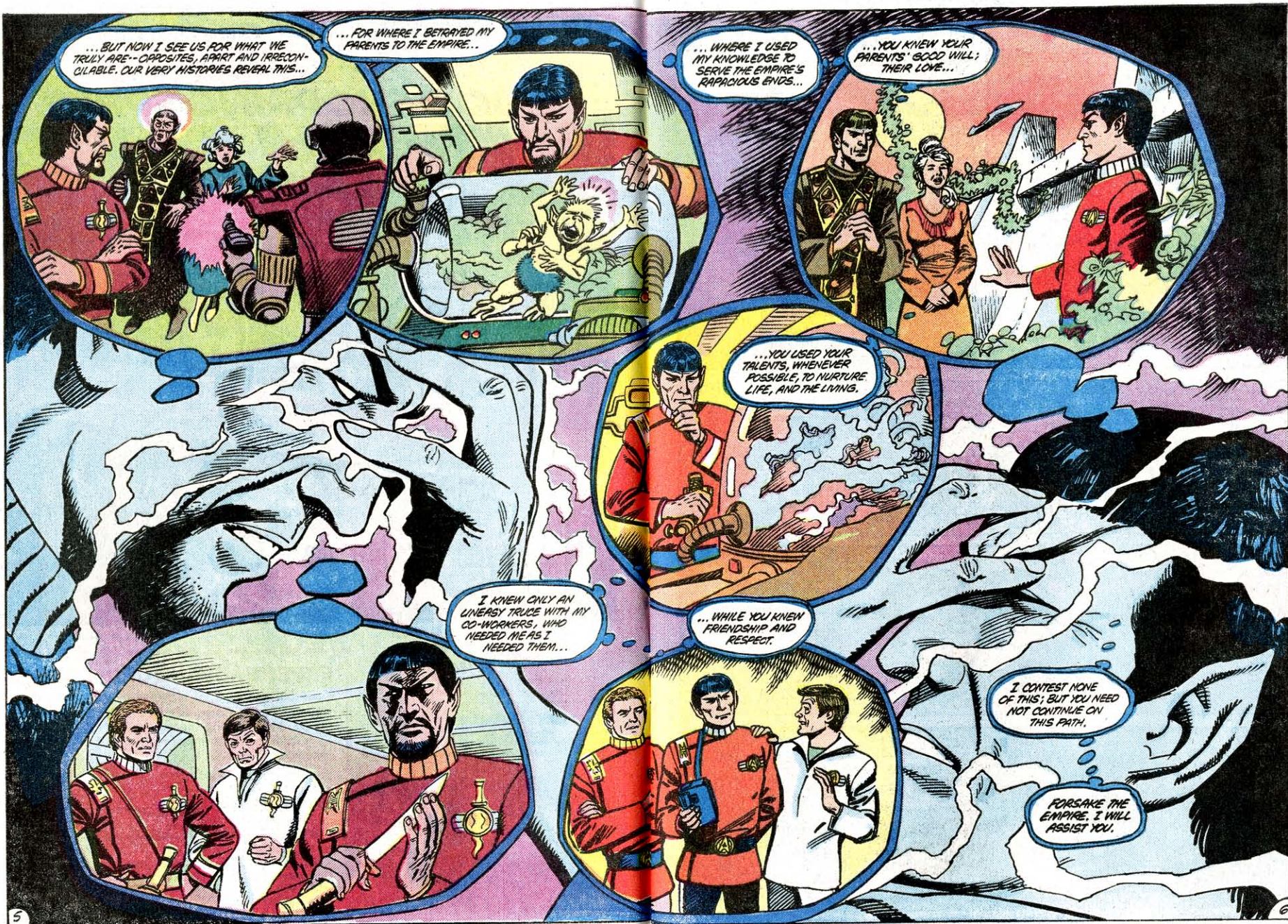
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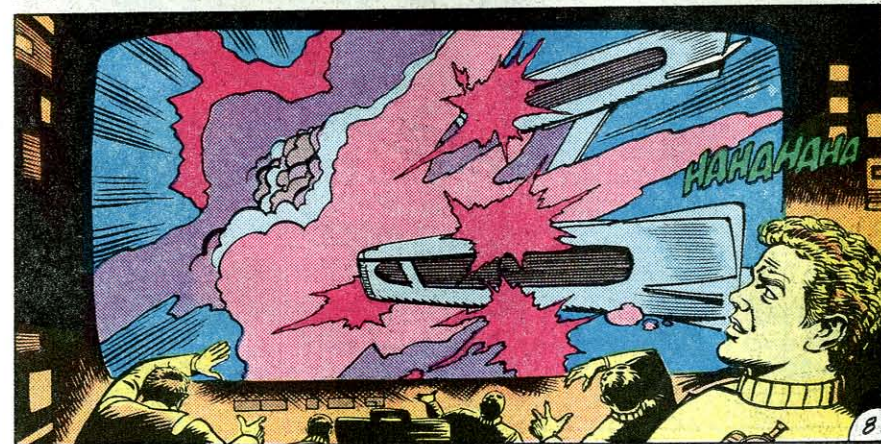
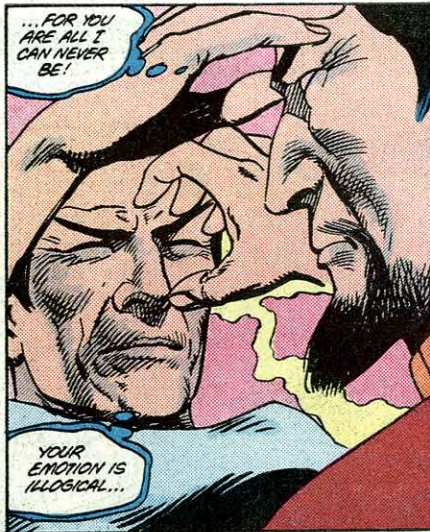
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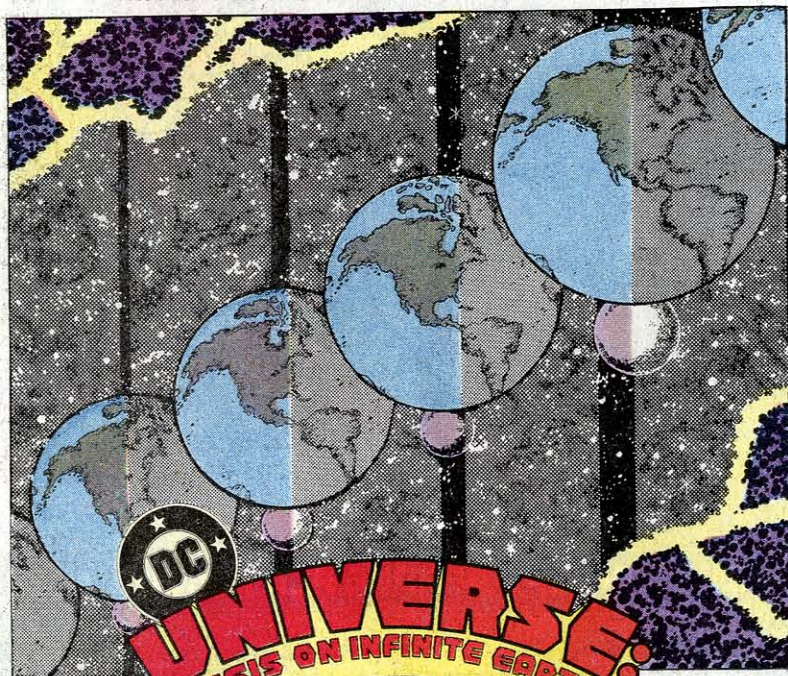
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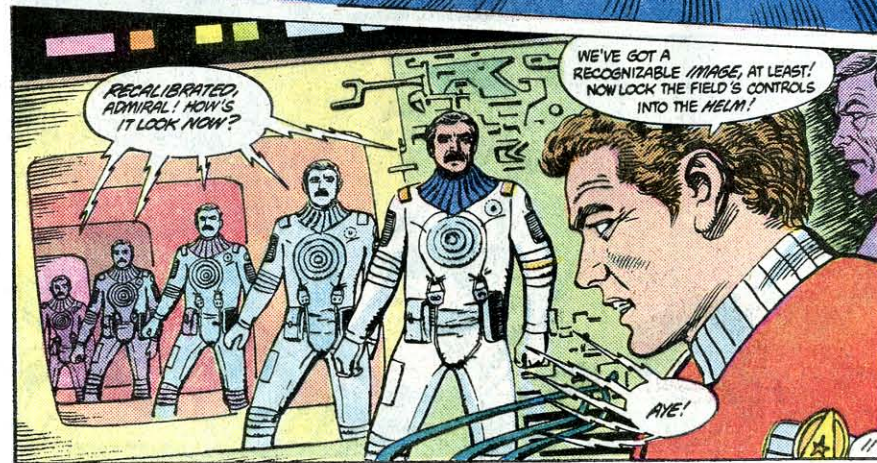
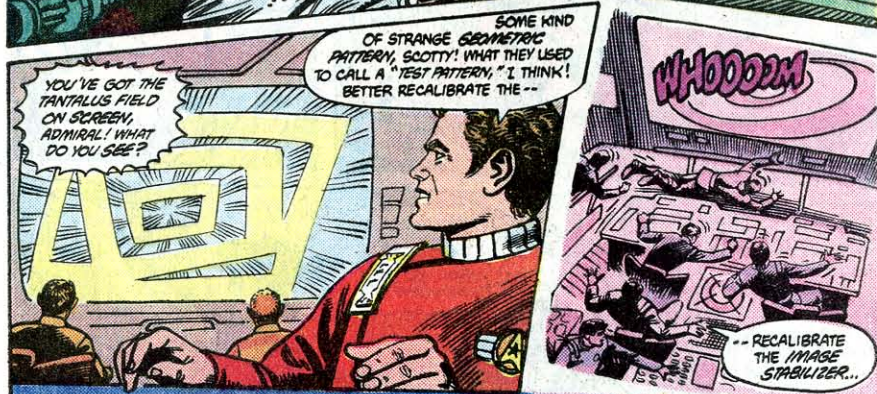


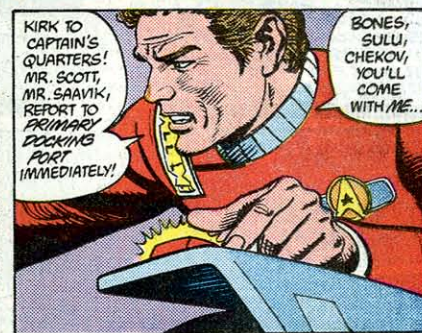
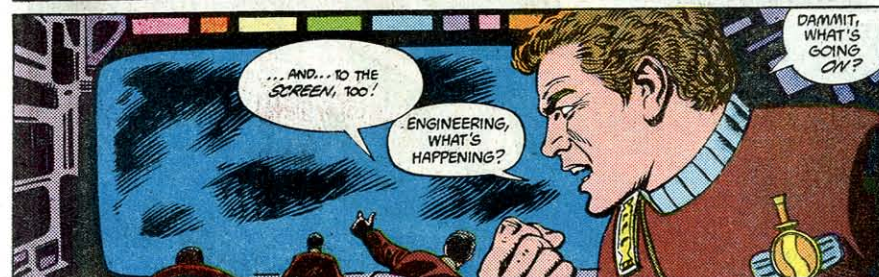
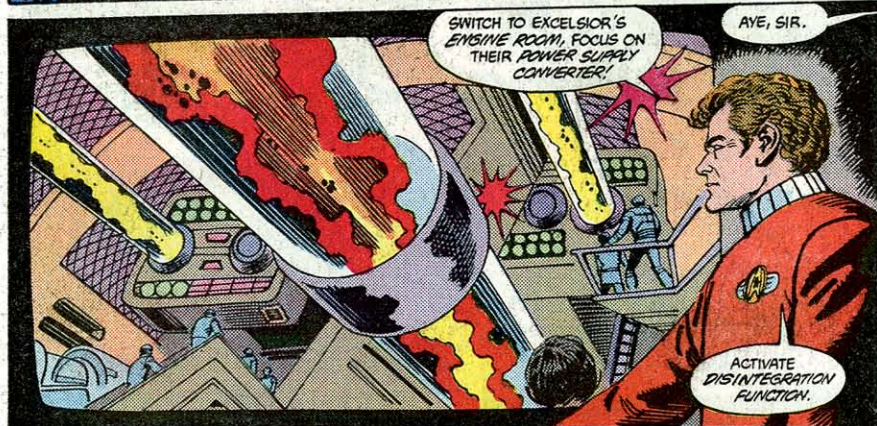
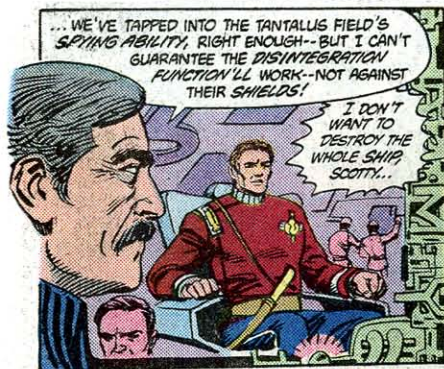
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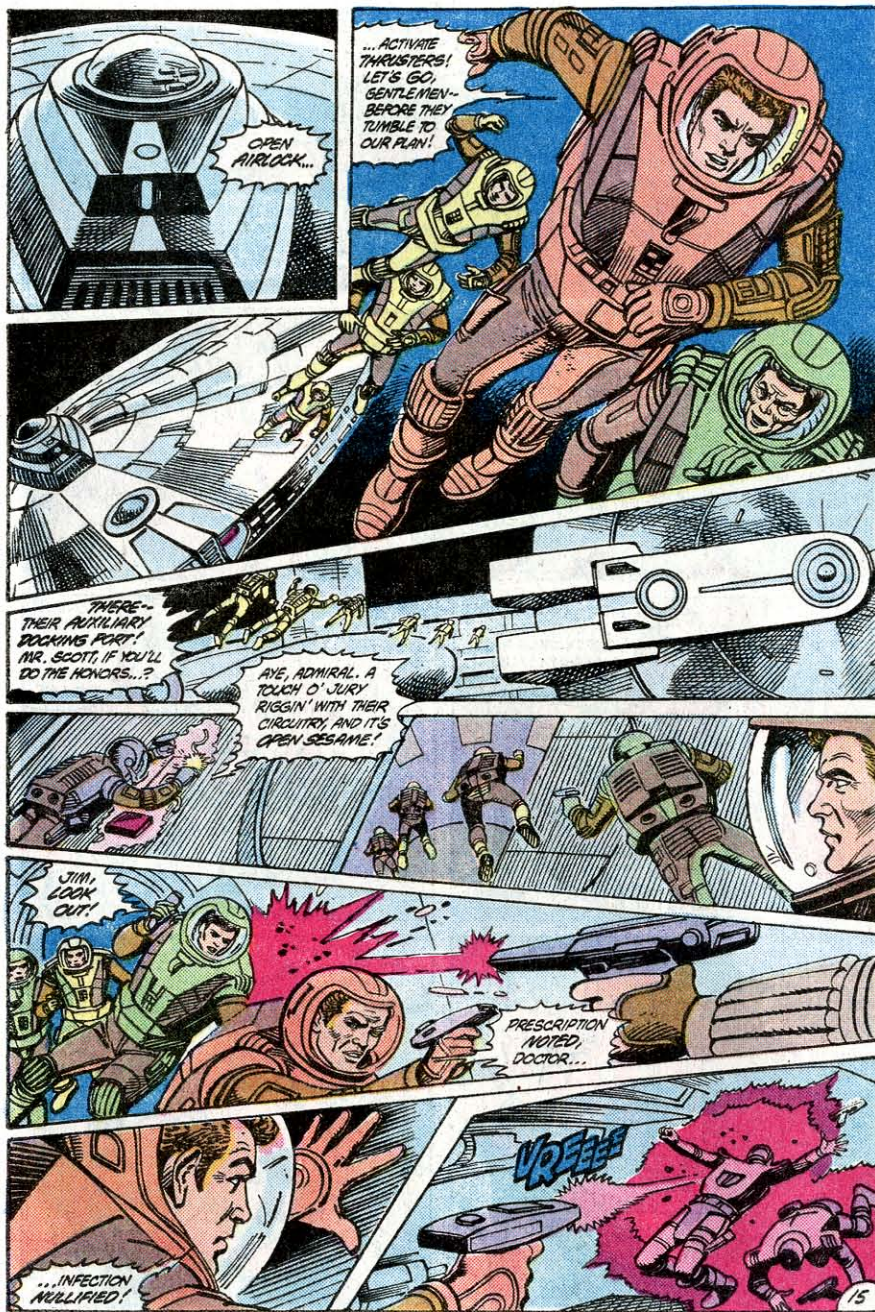


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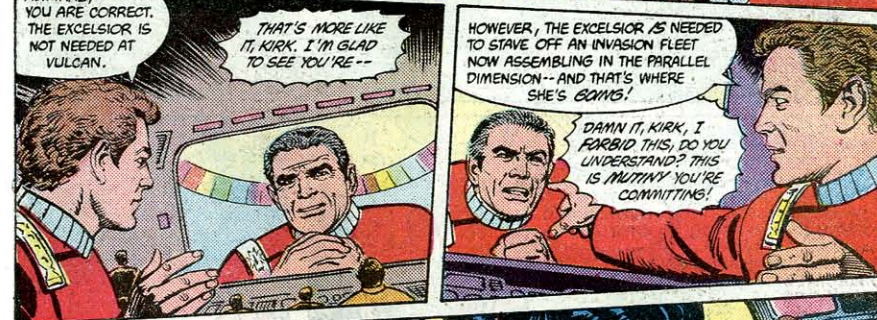
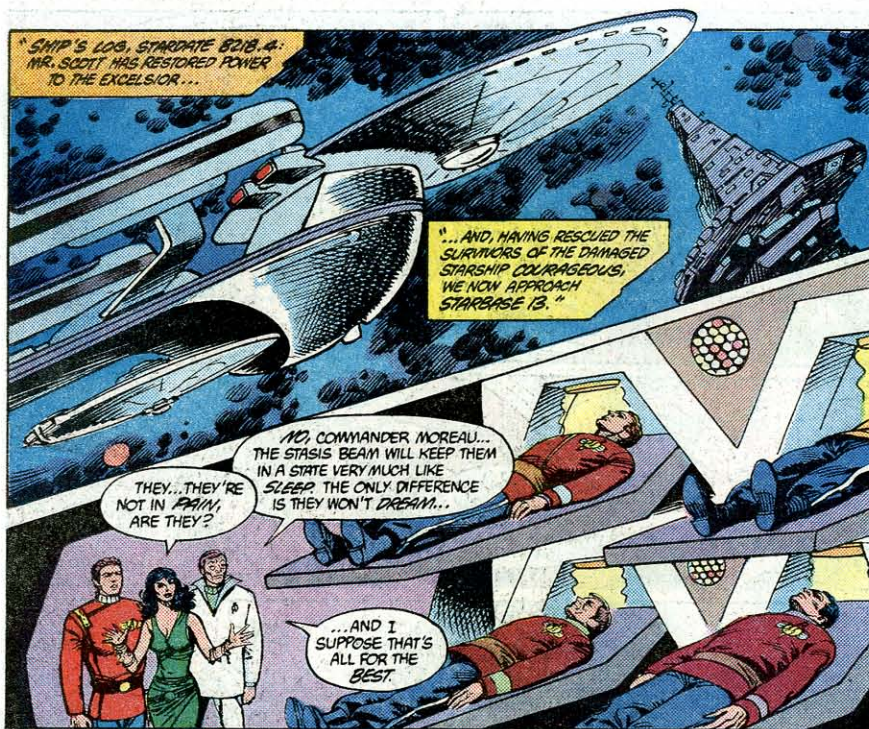


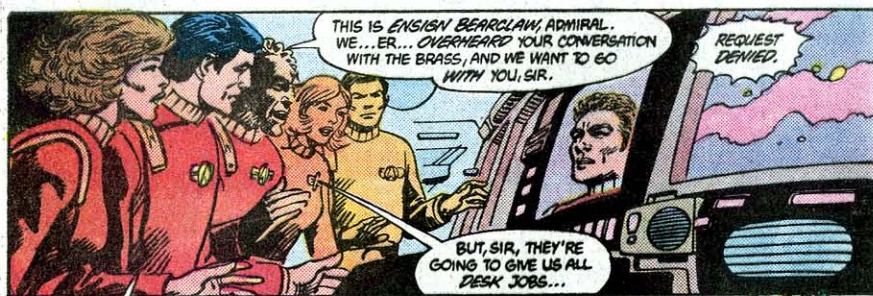


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GUEST MEANWHILE...

Dear Mr. Giordano,

Here's two attempts to get printed. Look at it this way: it's better than another one of my annoying letters to you. Anyway, I love to make speeches and I need the money. Okay, let's go. (Sound of throat clearing)

Dear Whoever-Reads-These-Things, I'd like to speak to you about a subject that has been ignored for years, an American tragedy, a shameful blot on the comics industry. I'd like to discuss heroine abuse and neglect.

Women in comics are treated terribly by both DC and Marvel, mostly by Marvel, but Jim Shooter doesn't do guest columns. They are downplayed, put-upon, wasted, ignored, and stereotyped into six categories. I like to call these categories the Six De's.

The first De is Dependence. The heroine is somehow linked to a hero, either by costume (like Batgirl), by relation (like Huntress), by romance (like Black Canary), or by joining a team (like Wonder Girl). Thus, the heroine has a bloody hard time standing alone and independent. Eventually, she becomes either a sidekick ("Green Arrow's Girlfriend, The Black Canary") or a bookend (Hawkmawman).

The next De is Deposition. Everyone ignores the heroine and hopes she'll go away. DC has an enormous wealth of interesting, exciting, and enjoyable heroines, most of whom haven't appeared in years.

Demoralization often goes under the guise of "characterization." The heroine is given a quirk in her personality or a mental aberration that cripples her. A good example is The

Thorn's split personality, which makes it impossible for her to fight in the daytime. The most common personality modes are The Bubblehead ("Oh, dear, this fight to the death with Vrot the Remarkably Unpleasant will surely ruin my manicure"), the Battlehappy Battler ("I will tear Vrot the Remarkably Unpleasant into little pieces!"), and the Weak and Helpless Type ("I would fight Vrot the Remarkably Unpleasant, but I'm so afraid of snakes and I'm a pacifist anyway").

Deglamorize is ridiculous but effective. The heroine is given an ugly costume, which effectively weakens her popularity without too badly weakening her ability in combat. I'm sure we're all familiar with the beautiful weather-goddess who was phenomenally popular and was just about to branch out into solo guest appearances and maybe even her own mini-series until the writer suddenly decided to have her go punk, complete with mohawk. This set her upon the road to ruin as she progressed to the next stage...

Depower! Of course, the aforementioned character was exposed to the fullest and most literal example of Depowering. She was stripped of her superhuman qualities and rendered utterly normal... a fate worse than death. There is a more subtle form of Depowering, where the heroine's talents are downplayed and presented as trivial. That way, she needs a hero around to keep her from getting killed. Thus, deadly destruct-bolts become stun-stings, extrasensory perception becomes "I sense an evil presence somewhere in

this room," and even telepathic mind-control becomes a parlor trick.

The most drastic step is Death. It means exactly what you think it means. The heroine is quickly and not-very-neatly disposed of. Ever since Phoenix left this mortal coil, hundreds of heroines are sacrificed daily in a vain attempt to produce a classic comparable to her story. The only one that even comes close is "The Judas Contract," which featured the death of Terra—a death that, let's face it, we knew was going to happen. Too many heroines have been sacrificed to the great volcano god Fan-Dom. It's about time the writers found a new cliché to overuse.

Now, I'm not suggesting that the comics creators are engaging in a sinister conspiracy. It's doubtful that Mr. Giordano has even realized the problem. But it is sincerely wished that someone would realize what's going on and take steps to correct the problem. Why is it that when a character must go insane, sacrifice her life to save humanity, or get blasted by the neural-vac power-remover, it's always a woman?

I represent W.A.S.P., the Women Anti-Stereotyping Patrol. We have been attempting to correct this injustice (by the way, if any W.A.S.P.ers are reading this... for Heaven's sakes, write! I'm good, but I can't do it all alone), but we require some help. If a favorite heroine of yours has been suffering from one of the six symptoms, write to the comic of your choice (don't bother Mr. Giordano... that's my job) and complain, politely but firmly. If any submitters are reading this, consider revamping an old heroine or creating a new one as your project. It might be fun. I know I had fun when I did it (I didn't have fun when DC rejected it, but that's not important). And if any professional comics writers are reading this... for gosh sakes, lay off the heroines, will ya?

I thank you for your time. Now let's see if I can get this thing printed.

Michael Pickens
Greentree Apartments
784 Blacksnake Rd.
D-4
Utica, OH 43080

I hope this doesn't fall under "defamatory." I tried to present the facts as I see them and to give DC a fair shake. If you do decide to print it, I believe you'll have room for a rebuttal.

Batman 381: The final fates of Mayor Hill, Nocturna, Slayer of Night, and Jason!

The Flash 343: Flash finds himself teamed with—Big Sir!

G.I. Combat 275: The Haunted Tank on a new top-secret mission!

Superman 405: Two more thrilling tales with the Man of Steel!

Arak 42: Arak, Valda, and Satyrus fight for their lives on a deadly island!

Amethyst 3: While Amethyst fights

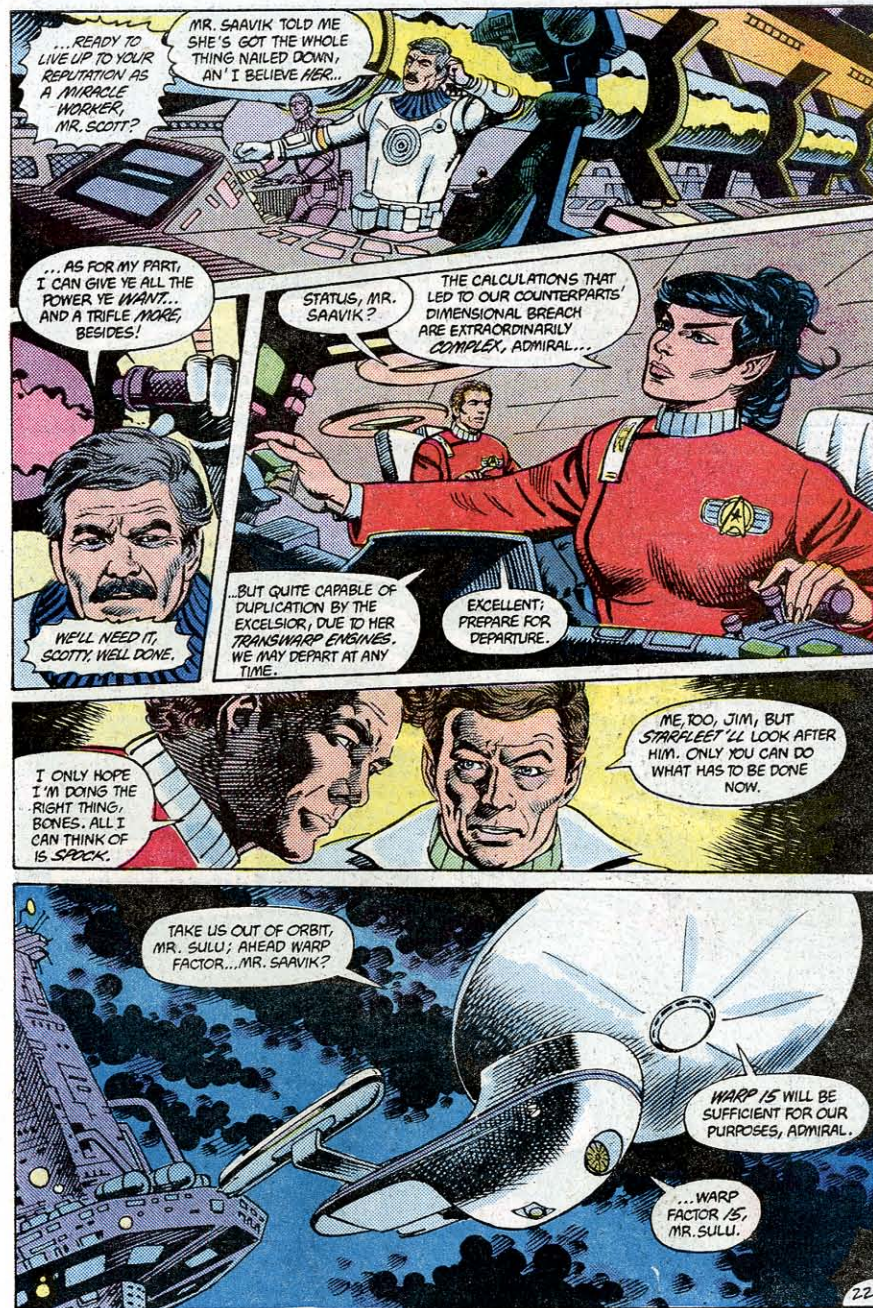
Fire Jade, Topaz romances Turquoise! **Tales of the Teen Titans 52:** Cheshire fights the Titans to kill Jericho's mother!

Jemm, Son of Saturn 7: Will Bouncer's decision lead to his death?

Star Trek 12: Spock mindmelds with Spock while the battle heats up!

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Before we begin, a word of congratulations to Mike Barr, who, as of this issue, becomes co-editor with Marv Wolfman. This was done to recognize Mike's wonderful contribution as writer and to free up some of Marv's time for other projects, including DC's newest title: V. Yes, starting this month we'll be presenting brand-new adventures based on the NBC weekly series. It's by Cary Bates, Carmine Infantino, and Tony DeZuniga—don't miss it.

Dear Editor,

After last issue, I was very concerned about how Mike was going to manage to dovetail his carefully laid-out continuity with the adaptation of the third *Star Trek* movie. However, Mr. Barr succeeded in allaying my fears and producing a story that not only wrapped up the origin of Saavik, but also integrated the comic continuity with that from the movie, creating a harmonious, logical whole. Bravo, Mr. Barr! You may take a well-deserved bow.

Let me also add my applause to those cheering the art team of Tom Sutton and Ricardo Villagran. They are growing more and more familiar with the characters, which has led to increasingly consistent and compelling visual characterizations. Sulu, Scotty, and Saavik have never looked better.

Stuart Rockafellow
No Address Given

Dear Star Trekkers,

Excellent! That's what I have to say about DC's adaptation of *The Search for Spock* and the two-part Saavik story. The return of the Romulans was long overdue and I was glad to see them in issue eight. The Romulans are among the baddest baddies in the *Star Trek* universe. I'd like to see an all-out war between the Federation and the Romulan Empire.

The artwork on *TREK* has been great and the stories have been interesting. It's obvious that you guys are determined to make this third comic book incarnation of *Trek* succeed where the others failed.

Mark Facciani
No Address Given

Dear Mike, Marv, and Tom,
I've just finished reading "Blood

Fever" and it is a very well-written issue. But there is one thing that bothers me. How did the Romulans find out what happened to Gary Mitchell in "Where No Man Has Gone Before"?

I also hope you give more exposure to the supporting characters (Scotty, Uhura, Sulu, and Chekov); at least give them one story each. Also, use your own supporting characters (Konom, Bearclaw, Bryce, and Sherwood) in stories of their own. Now, with Gene Roddenberry's approval, you cannot lose.

J.J. Sanmiguel
8035 SW 28th Street
Miami, FL 33155

Mike and the others thank you for the words of support. To keep the tallies straight we've also received kind words from DeForest Kelley, whom Mike had the pleasure of meeting at a New York convention in August.

As for the Gary Mitchell question, frankly, we have to assume the Romulans have spies just like the Klingons. If spies can steel such highly sensitive material as the Genesis file, then something like the Gary Mitchell information would be a snap to obtain.

Dear Marv,

In this issue, once more Captain Kirk shows his powers of being the best Starfleet Captain around. With two superb offensive moves, he is back on top in the defensive mode again.

As for the conclusion to Saavik's Pon Farr story—it ended with a lot of loose ends as to what happens. Mr. Saavik and David head off to the *Grisson*. Xon goes off to where? Do we get to find out what happens in the near future?

PFC Robert W. Rogers
2214 Adams
Evansville, IN 47714

Xon returned to Vulcan, where he was living and working before going off on his dangerous mission.

Dear Mike, Marv, Tom, and Ricardo,
I just put down *STAR TREK* #8 and I must compliment you on the way you tied your comic series in between the two movies.

A few questions on the issue: 1) What is the *Enterprise* doing with a cloaking device? 2) The Romulan ship looked oddly shaped and didn't appear to have the entire "Bird of Prey" emblem.

3) What happened to the trouble between ensigns Bryce and Bearclaw? Don't tell me you are giving up on them already!

Ralph La Pierta
2555 Yates Avenue
Bronx, NY 10469

In order: 1) It's been fifteen years since the cloaking device was stolen from the Romulans and we're assuming that all three races (Klingons included) have access to that technology. 2) Just as the Federation has a variety of star-ship designs, so too do the Romulans. 3) We haven't given up on Bearclaw and Bryce—not at all. But since we've been following what has happened in the movie, we've had to establish our regular cast a bit more forcefully. As you may have noticed over the last few months, Mike's original creations are back in action.

Gentlemen,

I must congratulate you for creating a *Star Trek* series good enough to quench the thirst of a long-standing *Star Trek* fan such as myself. I personally enjoy the way you have combined both the television series and the movies.

I do, however, have a few questions regarding issue 8:

1.) According to the information I have uncovered, Federation shuttles are defenseless and completely unarmed. How do you explain the firepower in the shuttle stolen by Saavik, and, if that power does exist, how could it be powerful enough to break through the *Enterprise*'s shields?

2.) Since when do Vulcan females suffer from Pon Farr?

3.) I know for a fact that the Federation has never been able to duplicate the Romulan cloaking device, even though they had a working model. So where did the *Enterprise* get its cloaking device?

4.) On page 20, panel 5, Scotty claims that the *Enterprise* could not hold up against an attack by a Bird of Prey. It is well known that, next to the *Excelsior*, the *Enterprise* is/was the most powerful ship in the Federation fleet, whereas the Romulan Bird of Prey is a ship so poorly designed that the Romulans switched over to a Klingon design in the third season of the television series. Please explain this inconsistency.

5.) How does this tale, which seems to lead directly into *Star Trek III*, fit in with the pre-movie tale that takes up the first three chapters of the book *Star Trek*

III: *The Search for Spock* by Vonda N. McIntyre?

Steve Brasen
5 New England Dr.
Lake Hiawatha, NJ 07034

One more time, in order: 1) *The craft Saavik was using was not a standard starship shuttle and was therefore more powerfully equipped than anything you may have read about.* 2) *We've been discussing the Pon Farr question over the last few columns but for the final time: we are assuming that just as males have Pon Farr, females go through their version of the ritual. It has never been stated that Vulcan women do not go through the ancient rite.* 3) *See the answer to the letter before yours.* 4) *You are assuming that in the 15 years that Scotty made those statements, the Romulans have not improved. Yet, we know they have exchanged technological information with the Klingons, so it is safe to assume they have improved dramatically.* 5) *As we stated a few columns back, we try and make our TREK stories fit in with the movies and television episodes. Since no one at Paramount checks matters of continuity in the comics or novels, we have to pick and choose. Remember, we see the novels the same time you do, so sometimes we get surprised. We're not obligated to follow their events, nor are the authors ordered to follow what we have established. A thorny problem, especially for fans, but we try our best. This is not to say we dislike the novels, in fact, some of our friends have written several of them. And there are some we find especially enjoyable, such as *The Final Reflection*; *My Enemy, My Ally*; *The Entropy Effect*; *Yesterday's Son*; and *Covenant of the Crown*.*

Dear Star-Crew,
Wow! Page 18 of #8 showed an incredibly good shot by the *Enterprise's* phasers! Imagine this: By just "locking phasers" on the "Romulan base" (nothing more specific was mentioned) while not knowing the nature of the Romulan experiments, with just one shot the single crucial element (the power receiver) is neatly sheared from its supports to ensure the success of Our Heroes. What is the explanation for this?

- (a) Incredible good luck.
- (b) Superior Federation technology.
- (c) The result of Living Right.
- (d) Incredible good luck.
- (e) Xon planted a homing device on the receiver.
- (f) Vulcan mind-meld (*Star Trek* Standard Solution #1B).
- (g) Incredible good luck.
- (h) There's a good reason, but it's too complex to explain here.
- (i) Incredible Romulan bad luck.
- (j) Incredible good luck.

Other than that, the issue was a rather enjoyable one. In particular, the "logical" relationship between Saavik and Xon was interestingly and amusingly done. I've always maintained that the Vulcans' statement that they have

no emotions is mainly an effort to convince themselves. Their emotions may be less violent or intense (for good or bad) than ours, but they certainly exist nonetheless. Surely, such things as attachment to family cannot be purely intellectualized?

T.M. Maple
Box 1272, Station B
Weston, Ont. M9L2R9

COMING ATTRACTIONS

Next issue Kirk and the *Excelsior* find themselves in deep water as they learn more and more about the "Mirror Mirror" universe. You'll learn where the Empire has come from and what has happened to some familiar counterparts in this savage land.

Don't forget, we will be presenting the first issue of V this month, something which Marv is excited about. Marv is, of course, also busy with his work on the two *TEEN TITANS* comics every month

in addition to *THE VIGILANTE*. Mike, by the way, is writer/editor of *BATMAN AND THE OUTSIDERS*, one of DC's biggest successes in recent years, and we recommend you take a look at it if you already aren't a big fan.

And we have a few science fiction titles that you may want to take a look at, including two mini-series currently under way. The first is *SPANNER'S GALAXY* by Nick Cuti and Tom Mandrake, all about the most wanted man in the galaxy. The other is a full-length version of *BARREN EARTH*, the intriguing series in the back of *WARLORD*. That one is by Gary Cohn and Ron Randall. Our inker, Ricardo Villagran, has returned to the pages of *ATARI FORCE*, where he is lending his special skills to the pencils of Ed Barreto, who drew issue 7 of *TREK*. And there are big changes in the works for *OMEGA MEN*, starting with #26 in February. If you have never tried that one, now's a good time.

Until next time, keep smiling.
—Bob Greenberger

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