

THE CAGE^{AND} THE MENAGERIE

A COMPARISON by James Van Hise



(Above) Mr. Spock and Captain Pike. (Right) Susan Oliver as Vina, the Orion slave girl.



When the original *Star Trek* pilot starring Jeffrey Hunter was filmed in December '64 through January '65, it was longer than the version which aired in November 1966 in the two part episode titled "The Menagerie". The original pilot started out being called "The Cage" while the script was being written, but just prior to the actual filming of it the title was altered to "The Menagerie". So even though the actual title of the first pilot is "The Menagerie", just as the later two-part version is, most people refer to the original version as "The Cage" as it immediately differentiates from the later footage added for the series' two part episode. I'll be doing the same in this article to make the discussion of the two versions less complicated.

When I refer to its title as being "The Cage", even here I'm primarily referring to the script as the actual filmed pilot bore no title other than the *Star Trek* title logo identifying the series.

In the two part version, when it begins showing the flashbacks (which are actually "The Cage"), some scenes are already missing. These are very fine character scenes involving Number One (Majel Barrett) and the red haired, pixyish Yeoman J.M. Colt (Laurel Goodwin). Upon meeting his female yeoman, Pike grumbles about the bridge being no place for a female. Number One looks up at Pike, a bit surprised, and Pike remarks off-handedly that "You're different." This was written by the same Gene Roddenberry who would later take credit for putting women in important roles on the series, although it should be mentioned that jokes of this type were common in early Sixties television. Roddenberry may have been embarrassed by this stuff and deleted it for more than just reasons of time when it came to edit this episode into the series run two years later.

Number One, who is Pike's first officer, has the largely unemotional characteristics which were transferred to Spock in the second pilot, "Where No Man Has Gone Before", where Spock became a much more interesting



character than the young, highly excitable Spock of the first pilot. In fact, these characters were combined into Spock and Number One eased out because NBC felt that, "No one would believe a woman holding a position of authority." Which is to say that no one at NBC could accept the notion in 1965.

When Captain Pike decides to go to Talos IV to pick up the survivors, and he orders the *Enterprise* to go to hyperdrive, the bridge becomes transparent and we see Pike and the others superimposed over the stars which they're rapidly passing. Throughout this space voyage scene the *Star Trek* theme is played.

The scenes of Pike, Spock and the rest of the landing party transporting down to the surface, the discovery of the survivors and the capture of Pike are all the same. But when Pike wakes up in his cage another missing scene took place, and it's a rather important scene which should have been left in for rea-



(Top) Number One (Majel Barrett), Captain Christopher Pike (Jeffrey Hunter) and Yeoman Colt (Laurel Goodwin) in a publicity still shot at the time that the first pilot was filmed. (Bottom) A behind-the-scenes shot from "The Cage".



sons of continuity. When Pike looks out of his cage he sees that there is a menagerie of other creatures. He glimpses a bird/man type of creature as well as the ape creature which the Talosian Keeper later transforms itself into when it's trying to escape Pike's grasp. In "The Menagerie" the transformation of the Keeper into this creature is quite startling as we're unaware of from where the Keeper drew this image it suddenly manifests. While the early shots of these two creatures are brief, they are nonetheless fascinating and establish that there are indeed other creatures held captive here.

There is also a major difference in the Keeper itself. In "The Cage", the voice of the Keeper was done by Malachi Throne, but since he also appears as Commodore Mendez in "The Menagerie", the voice was changed. Whether the voice was actually changed because Throne had been chosen for the role in "The Menagerie" or whether he received this role because they decided to redub the part of the Keeper is uncertain. But the voice substituted in place of Throne's soft, very humanlike tones is much more effective as it sounds more alien and aloof, transmitting the threatening power of the Keeper's character much better. Oddly enough, at the end of the first part of "The Menagerie", when they showed the coming attractions for part two, the voice of the Keeper (which hadn't been heard at all in the first part) is Malachi Throne's original voice from "The Cage", although it's doubtful that a week later anyone

would have remembered the specific tonality heard for only a few seconds on the previous week's show. But today this short "coming attractions" clip for part two is still occasionally shown on some stations and *Star Trek* mavins pick up the difference right away since the sounds of *Star Trek* are as familiar to any fan as the sights are.

Although a completely new voice for the Keeper was dubbed in, no dialogue was changed in the scenes which were retained from "The Cage", not that it would have mattered since we were actually supposedly hearing the Keeper's thoughts as their lips didn't move. There is the brief new dialogue showing the Keeper appearing on the viewscreen such as when Pike is beamed down to the planet at the conclusion of the story, but this is just a stock shot of the Keeper reused (and obviously so) with the additional dialogue added on.

There was part of a scene with the Keeper dropped which was another insight into the character of Number One. After Number One and the Yeoman have materialized in Pike's cage and the Keeper is describing traits in their favor, the alien goes on to mention that Pike always figures prominently in Number One's fantasies, with the implication being obvious. This added invasion of the women's minds shows even more clearly why Pike becomes so outraged with them, as it's not only that they've kidnapped the women, but have raped their minds and held up their innermost thoughts for public inspection. With the added dialogue the scene is highly voyeuristic and a bit bizarre for Sixties television.

But getting back to the progression of the episodic changes, an addition is made in "The Menagerie" which dramatically underscores a scene. When the Keepers first appear to Pike and are coldly discussing him and his actions, they conclude their conversation by saying, "We can soon begin the experiment." In "The Cage", Pike just looks at them in surprise and they walk away. In "The Menagerie", a very dramatic musical chord is added

to the soundtrack to emphasize the menace of that phrase. So in "The Cage" this scene is curiously flat and unaffecting as just dead air greets the pronouncement, but the simple addition of that chord transforms this scene into one with chilling impact in "The Menagerie".

There are scenes aboard the *Enterprise* while Pike is held prisoner on Talos IV which are cut as well. In "The Cage", Spock, Dr. Boyce (John Hoyt) and others in the conference room discuss the Talosians further, even displaying a diagram of a Talosian skull on the monitor in the briefing room. Then following the seemingly unsuccessful attempt to blast through the door through which Pike was dragged beneath the planet's surface, Spock decides that they are powerless against the Talosians and he takes command of the *Enterprise* ordering it to leave orbit so that they can seek assistance. But he is stymied in this attempt as the ship's power fades and the *Enterprise* is held in orbit. It is then that they notice that some force is going through the ship's library computers at incredible speed. None of this is even hinted at in "The Menagerie".

While it is probable that most cuts made in "The Cage" for its insertion into "The Menagerie" were done due to the time factor involved, some do seem rather subjectively chosen (primarily the character scenes, of which there were still more cut and which I'll get to in a moment).

One of the most memorable scenes in "The Menagerie" is the picnic scene





Sean Kenney as the crippled Captain Pike in "The Menagerie". Not clapperboard which shows date this new footage was filmed.

which is supposed to represent the Earth that Pike remembers in its pastoral setting surrounded by trees and animals while in the far distance the glistening spires of a futuristic city are apparent in the haze. This was the only time the TV series even remotely showed anything which was supposed to be Earth in the future, and even this only gave hints, albeit optimistic ones in keeping with the show's premise of a positive future.

But in "The Cage" the picnic scene is longer and odder as Pike talks much more about the Keepers and how this is all just illusion. It is a much stranger sequence in "The Cage" than in "The Menagerie" as Vina says things like, "You know I get those headaches when you talk strangely like that," and Pike replies that if they have children those headaches will be inherited by them. There's a good minute or two of dialogue excised from this scene when it appears in "The Menagerie", but it's skillfully handled and demonstrates just how editing can alter something in so subtle a manner that you can't ordinarily tell something has been lifted bodily from the middle of the scene, or in this case from the middle of a conversation.

On the surface of Talos IV when Vina explains why she must remain behind and Pike turns to the Keeper and says, "You'll give her back her illusion of beauty?" and the Keeper replies, "And more." when Pike turns back he sees Vina walking away with a double of himself. This scene of Vina walking

away with Pike is used in "The Menagerie" when Pike is supposed to have returned to Vina on Talos IV and is living in his mind as a whole man once more, unfettered by his physical body.

Back aboard the *Enterprise*, on the bridge, Dr. Boyce is discussing how Pike had three females to choose from, and why it really wasn't such a bad idea, whereupon Pike turns to the doctor and calls him a "dirty old man". But the final word is had by the pretty, red-haired Yeoman Colt (Laurel Goodwin), who was one of those girls which Pike had to choose from (and who certainly would have received my enthusiastic support!). When she asks Pike, "Who would have been Eve?", the captain just glares at her and she quickly busies herself with other duties.

Jeffrey Hunter never returned to *Star Trek* because of film commitments he made after the first *Star Trek* pilot was rejected and before the second one was put into production, nor was he available to shoot new scenes for "The Menagerie" in 1966. All the scenes of the crippled Captain Pike were done by an actor named Sean Kenney who was uncredited in the episode.

In May of 1969, Jeffrey Hunter returned from filming in Spain. While there he'd been injured in a premature explosion which had knocked him down and caused him to sustain head injuries. He suffered from dizzy spells after returning home and it was appar-

ently one of those dizzy spells which caused his death. Hunter was found unconscious at the foot of a stairway in his home, having apparently stumbled at the top. He was rushed to Valley Hospital where he underwent brain surgery and died. He was only 41 years old. Ironically, had he remained with *Star Trek* for the three years it ran, he never would have been in Spain making a film in early 1969.

"The Menagerie" formed a high watermark in series science fiction which has rarely been equalled since. It took a cerebral yet exciting story and combined it with a mysterious and exciting duel of wills between Kirk and Spock as the court martial slowly unraveled the strange story of Talos IV and its link to the fate of Captain Pike. The feelings and philosophies of all the characters were explored so that we understood why they acted as they did and thus cared about their decisions and the impact those actions would have. When Kirk sees Pike freed from his horrible physical prison at the conclusion of "The Menagerie", we share his sense of triumph and renewal. Something wonderful was accomplished in the life of a human being and it's this deeper sense of humanity that has elevated *Star Trek* above all series SF which has followed. Whether it be the tepid *Space: 1999*, the drab adventures of *The Phoenix*, the stumbling efforts of *Logan's Run* or the excruciating mindlessness of *Buck Rogers*, all have only served to show why *Star Trek* has sustained its reputation, as well as raising inexplicable questions about why none of the series which followed understood the importance of characters who think and feel on levels of consequence.

This original version of "The Cage", while never telecast, can be seen if Gene Roddenberry ever gives a talk in your area as he brings it along so that the fans can see a version of *Star Trek* which is new to them. So even if you've seen "The Menagerie" a dozen times, seeing "The Cage" is a whole new experience in *Star Trek*.