

(K) ST III

December 3, 1982

Dear Michael,

Before our discussion of Star Trek on Monday, this letter may get something out of the way which has troubled me and perhaps you too.

I have no vendetta against Leonard Nimoy. I doubt if anyone, including yourself, admires more than I do the things that he has brought to our show over the years.

With that out of the way, I want to now point out some unusual opportunities which Star Trek III can offer. The powerful impact of the "rebirth" of Spock (in the quite different way you will see it handled in my story) is one of those "happenings" which can occur only in our business. Properly handled, it can become a true theatrical event.

The idea began first as just an original way of bringing Spock back from death. But as the idea began to flesh out, a number of creative opportunities became obvious. Among these choices are:

a. The rapid growth of Spock (now credibly explained in the story) from infancy to young manhood and finally into the Nimoy playing the mature Spock we have all known. All this played, of course, against the crisis of somehow halting his runaway aging so that he does not die an old man in a few weeks.

b. A not quite so rapid growth, making use of the dramatic opportunities inherent in young Spock's childhood, adolescence and young manhood which our audience has never dreamed it possible to ever see. Then, at an appropriate place in the story, Spock's aging is somehow halted at about 28 years. In this version, the 28 year old young man is Spock, keeping the essential Spock personality intact within a new and younger version of the same "logical" Vulcan.

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c. A combination of the above in which we keep the 28 year old Spock through this film's ending but establish that his aging has not been entirely halted and in a year or so (Star Trek IV or whatever) he will have again become the original mature Nimoy/Spock. This gives us then some time in which to access the abilities of the young Spock actor and our audience's reaction to reducing the average age level on our bridge via a younger version of one of those principal characters. None of this closes off our option of later announcing that Paramount has finally persuaded Nimoy to again play Spock in our next film.

You and I have both believed, Michael, that a long series of successful Star Trek films is possible. The James Bond producers found eight workable film stories here on Earth. I agree with you that there must be at least several times that much excitement in the thousand-million diverse worlds of Star Trek's galaxy.

We probably also agree that accomplishing the above probably requires that Star Trek III aim for even higher levels of imagination, credibility, and other new dynamics. The way to do this seems fairly obvious. Without throwing away any well proven format strengths, we must make a major effort to find fresh new levels of the same kind of originality and take the same kind of creative risks that began the whole thing way back in 1966.

This is not a recommendation for any changes in the people working on Star Trek III. Nor is it a hint that I want to be back in charge again. I would much prefer it remain possible for me to assist Paramount and you by seeking and encouraging in others the kind of science fiction imagination and credibility which have always been proven necessary to this property. I have tried to demonstrate some of my thoughts on the above in my storyline which will be on Gary Nardino's desk this Wednesday.

Sincerely,

Gene Roddenberry

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