

**Star Trek: TOS (#02) – “Entropy Effect”**  
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Back Cover:

*THE UNIVERSE HAS LESS THAN A CENTURY LEFT...UNLESS SPOCK CAN CHANGE HISTORY!*

*The Enterprise is summoned to transport a dangerous criminal from starbase prison to a rehabilitation center: brilliant physicist, Dr. Georges Mordreaux, accused of promising to send people back in time – then killing them instead. But when Mordreaux escapes, bursts onto the bridge and kills Captain Kirk, Spock must journey back in time to avert disaster – before it occurs! Now there's more at stake than just Kirk's life. Mordreaux's experiments have thrown the entire universe into a deadly time warp. Spock is fighting time ... and the universe is closing in on itself with the relentless squeeze of ...*

*THE ENTROPY EFFECT*

Synopsis:

The Enterprise is engaged in an unprecedented scientific study of a naked singularity primarily by Spock's efforts, when a top priority message forces Captain Kirk to divert to Aleph Prime, a nearby mining colony. The interruption ruins the observation cycle, but Spock's findings seem to indicate that the Universe has less than a century of life left to it. Unable to continue, the Enterprise sets off.

On Aleph Prime, prosecuting attorney Ian Braithewaite – who finds Spock oddly familiar – claims that no such message was sent; however, since the ship is now here, he asks Kirk to transport a dangerous prisoner to Rehab Colony Seven. Spock is surprised to learn that the prisoner is the noted scientist Dr Georges Mordreaux, who has been found guilty of murder and experimenting on unwilling subjects. Convinced that there's more to the story (disbelieving that Mordreaux could be capable of the violence inherent in the crime), Spock orders new security chief Mandala Flynn to have Mordreaux confined to a VIP cabin rather than the detention cells, and to discontinue the regime of drugs that have reduced him to a state of near catatonia. Spock hopes Mordreaux would yield insights on the phenomenon he'd been researching. Prosecutor Braithewaite accompanies them on the journey, convinced that Mordreaux is dangerous. He also has a nagging feeling he's seen Spock before, though Spock is certain they've never met.

While at the Planet, Kirk is reunited with an old flame – Captain Hunter of the USS Aerfen. The Aerfen was part of a task force assigned to protect Federation colony worlds along the Klingon Neutral Zone. One of its many ports of call was Ganjitsu, where a young Hikaru Sulu snuck aboard the vessel in attempt to sign up, before getting a guided tour from the captain. Later, Sulu was expecting to be assigned to the Aerfen, before being transferred to the USS Enterprise. Faced with the tantalizing prospect of joining the

crew of the Aerfen once again, Sulu applies for and receives a transfer to Hunter's ship. Unfortunately this is not without personal consequence, as Sulu must leave his friend and lover – Security Chief Flynn – behind, although both agree the change is best for his career.

The Enterprise sets off for Rehab 7; while en route, odd things begin to happen: Scotty catches a glimpse of Spock in the transporter room when he should be on the bridge, and Spock apparently refuses to explain the discrepancy. Suddenly, a disheveled Mordreux appears on the bridge, injuring Braithewaite and shoots both Kirk and Flynn with “Spiderweb” slugs, bullets that choke the human nervous system with organo-metallic fibers. Flynn alerts security before she succumbs, but the security detail insists that Mordreux never left his cabin, and a search turns up no sign of the gun.

Kirk is rushed to sickbay where Doctor McCoy struggles heroically to save him, but he dies while Spock is mind-melded to him. Spock convinces the reluctant Doctor Leonard McCoy to terminate life support; however, the semi-conscious Braithewaite misinterprets what he's seeing. Believing that he saw Spock on Aleph Prime before the Enterprise arrived, he becomes convinced that Spock and McCoy are in league with Mordreux and have deliberately killed Kirk.

As Braithewaite begins to put together facts to form a working theory of conspiracy, Spock determines from their incarcerated physicist that he has, in fact, developed a time travel device using the transporter. The method was used to send his friends into the past, where they felt they could find a better life. The discovery had been suppressed by higher-ups in the Federation who feared its potential as a weapon, and he was framed for murder and his research destroyed. It seems that a future version of Mordreux is responsible for murdering Kirk, and the present-day version agrees to help Spock construct a time-changer to put matters right on condition that Spock not betray Mordreux's friends.

Spock travels back in time, but fails to save Kirk – and he is spotted in the transporter room by Scott, rousing the engineer's suspicions when the past version of Spock claims never to have been there. In the present, the Enterprise falters from the power drain required by the time travel device. As Scotty struggles to bring systems back online, he is compelled by Braithewaite's evidence that some kind of mischief is afoot. However, McCoy tries to divert attention, so give Spock enough time to accomplish his plans. This leads to both men believing that Spock and McCoy are conspiring to free Mordreux. Hunter and Sulu return to the Enterprise to help investigate, just as Spock uses the time-changer to go further back – this time to Aleph Prime. McCoy tries to cover for him, but is eventually forced to admit the truth, and despite the lack of evidence, Hunter agrees to give Spock twelve hours in the past when Sulu speaks up on his behalf.

Spock bumps into the younger Braithewaite on Aleph Prime, explaining why the prosecutor believed he'd been there before. He tries to stop Mordreux from sending the call that summoned the Enterprise, but discovers too late that he's stunned yet another version of Mordreux, who had traveled back in time to stop his younger self from

committing murder. Mordreaux explains that his experiments have caused the entropy effect that Spock noticed, shortening the Universe's life span to less than a century; the knowledge drove him mad, and he traveled back in time to take his revenge on those who'd allowed him to live – including Kirk, who helped Spock defend Mordreaux in the timeline in which he was sent to rehabilitation.

The older Mordreaux releases Spock from his promise, and Spock goes back one last time to convince the younger Mordreaux not to send his friends back through time in the first place. Mordreaux and his friends are skeptical until the older Mordreaux materializes before their eyes and crumbles to dust, his body finally succumbing to the strain of this dangerous means of time travel. Realizing that his older self found death preferable to living with what he'd done, the young Mordreaux agrees to abandon his research of his own accord. Spock returns to the "present" of the restored timeline to find that all is well, but that he has the memories of both versions of reality.

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