

Star Trek: TOS (#20) – “The Vulcan Academy Murders”
Pocket Books | November 1984

Back Cover:

Kirk and McCoy accompany Spock to the Vulcan Academy Hospital, seeking experimental treatment for a badly wounded Enterprise crew member. Spock's mother is also a patient in the hospital, and Kirk soon becomes involved in the complex drama of Spock's family... Suddenly, patients are dying, and Kirk suspects the unthinkable - murder on Vulcan! But can he convince the Vulcans that something as illogical as murder is possible? Until the killer is caught, everyone is in danger!

Summary:

On a routine patrol through a vast empty area of space, the Enterprise is attacked by a Klingon battle cruiser. Helm control has been lost, so Kirk is relaying orders down to auxiliary control. A final barrage overloads the Klingon deflectors, and the battle is won. Although she manages to emerge victorious, the fray is not without damage to the ship (which will take weeks in drydock to repair) and injuries to the crew: one young crew member in particular suffers severe damage to his nervous system. The timing is fortuitous, because Spock has just received word that his mother is seriously ill on Vulcan. He asks Kirk to join him on leave. When Dr. McCoy fears he may be a prisoner in his unfeeling body for the rest of his life, but Spock offers hope. He invites McCoy to bring the injured crewman to undergo the same life-saving experimental procedure being tested on Spock's mother.

Kirk orders the Enterprise to Vulcan and upon arrival they meet with the project leaders; Sorel and a human named Daniel Corrigan. Dr. Daniel Corrigan has spent more than half of his life living and working on Vulcan, at the famed Vulcan Academy of Sciences. Corrigan was one of the first off-world scientists to come to the Academy. He was teamed with the Vulcan healer Sorel for the first time in the late 2220s; their combined efforts resulted in the conception and birth of Spock, the first Vulcan-human hybrid. When he became affected by a condition that caused rapid physical aging, Corrigan's mind remained clear enough to allow him and Sorel to develop their methodology and find a way to save his life via a stasis-regeneration treatment. The regeneration not only arrested the condition, but also had the unexpected effect of reducing his physical age (Corrigan, by that time in his early seventies, came out of it looking like he was in his mid-thirties).

It is this process that is used for Sorel's wife, T'Zan, injured in an accident in the neurosciences lab, a crewman of the Starship Enterprise critically injured in battle, and Amanda Grayson, suffering from degenerative xenosis (a degeneration of the neural pathways, and as the nervous system cannot naturally regenerate). There they will remain, unconscious, while the lengthy process of regeneration takes place.

This gives Spock an opportunity to visit with his father and mother while there. Sarek, Spock's father, has come to accept his son's decision to join Star Fleet and is trying to once again build their bonds. But something goes terribly wrong:

Sorel's wife T'Zan dies from an apparent system failure – a failure that should never have happened. Corrigan begins to blame himself for trying “untested treatments” on his patients. Kirk originally theorizes that the intent was to discredit Sorel and Corrigan's work and break up their partnership, but when a second “system failure” occurs resulting in another death, Captain Kirk begins to suspect the impossible: someone is deliberately murdering patients at the Vulcan Academy. And so he begins an investigation to find the killer. But time is short, and with Spock's own mother a potential victim, Kirk must narrow down his list of suspects before it's too late-and with the killer hot on his trail.

One such suspect come to light after Corrigan bonds with Sorel's daughter T'Mir (after finding they had shared a mutual attraction for one another). This leads to an attack on Corrigan by a Vulcan radical named Sendet, leading the others to believe he was the one behind the “equipment failures”. Upon Sendet being cleared of that crime (but discovering several unrelated ones in the process) the discovery of the real killer is made: a deranged assistant of Sarek's (Eleya Miller) who was seeking Amanda's death so she could pair with him instead. After this discovery, Corrigan and Sorel continued their work at the Academy with the successful treatment of Amanda's condition.

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