

Five Things That Surprise Spock About The New Timeline

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Five Things That Surprise Spock About The New Timeline

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The congruencies of history, particularly regarding the Enterprise and her crew

It is illogical to believe in destiny; while very little is truly random, a multitude of factors govern the probability of each event.

Nero's interference has wrought vast changes in the Federation, particularly within Starfleet. Military development has been prioritized over scientific exploration to an unfortunate degree. The Enterprise NCC-1701 is much different than the Enterprise on which he served, and was constructed later. Robert April was never a starship captain in this timeline—he served, instead, on a series of starbases and scientific outposts. Even if he had captained a ship of the line, it would not have been Enterprise, for she was commissioned after his retirement in this timeline. Christopher Pike, however, was still captain of the Enterprise, and was still Spock's first Captain, however short lived that assignment. Number One never served on Enterprise; she was given her own ship sooner in this timeline, as Starfleet's accelerated military build-up created a far greater call for officers than in the original timeline. Caitlin Berry, Philip Boyce, T'Pol—none of them served on the Enterprise, either.

And yet, when a grave threat to the Federation appeared, Enterprise was the only surviving ship to face it, prevailing against severe odds. And she was crewed by James Kirk, Spock, Leonard McCoy, Montgomery Scott, Hikaru Sulu, Nyota Uhura, and Pavel Chekov. If the Pavel Chekov was not the same Pavel with whom Spock had served (born four years earlier, although to the same parents), it still defied the laws of probability.

Believing in destiny is illogical. Yet it is an illogic which he had always permitted himself. It is gratifying to see his faith proven correct, once again.

His young counterpart's relationship with Nyota Uhura

There was never anything between the two of them, in Spock's own timeline. Perhaps he should say, he never saw anything between them; he cannot, of course, speak for Nyota. She was a friend and a fine officer, and he appreciated their duets. They met at different stages in their lives than the Spock and Nyota Uhura of this timeline, of course; but he does not believe simple timing could make such a difference, although he does not know what other factors might be operating.

Did Nyota have such feelings for him, at one time? Romantic relationships have always been some of the most difficult forms of human interactions to understand; he has always been oblivious to "passes" made by his human colleagues, though they became easier to spot with experience. When Nyota first approached him for lessons on the ka'athrya, did she hope that a shared hobby would bring them closer together? Did she wish for a relationship, only to turn away at his lack of interest? He would not have chosen a human woman in any case, when they met, as he spent most of the five-year-mission under Captain Kirk trying to ignore his human heritage, as illogical as that had been after choosing a career among humans. But it is unsettling, this new perspective on one of his oldest friendships. There are questions that he can never answer.

Sarek

It amuses Spock that, although his own counterpart is very similar in most respects to his own younger self, his father's counterpart is so different. It seems that less of Spock's rebellion may be laid at Sarek's feet than he had thought. Although Spock himself clung to his culture even when his conflict with his father caused him to leave Vulcan, his counterpart had a greater conflict with Vulcan and remained in contact—however strained—with his father. In this timeline, there was no eighteen year silence. And how much of Spock's own conflict with his father was, at heart, a conflict with Vulcan culture?

A greater understanding of the course of the new history explains much. Nero's actions, and the revelation that Vulcans and Romulans were the same species so soon after the Romulan War and on the heels of the utter destruction of the Kelvin, fractured Vulcan's relationship with the Federation. In this timeline, Sarek was under much greater pressure for his close ties with Earth, symbolized by his wife and son. From what Spock can tell, his reaction was to attempt to serve as a mediator between his own culture and that of his wife, instead of as a bastion of Vulcan culture. It also led him to privilege his son's understanding and happiness over his son's conformity to Vulcan expectations.

Spock feels some envy for his counterpart's relationship with Sarek, but meditation is sufficient to master it. After all, both roads led to the same place.

Being an Elder

Vulcan has always prized the experience and wisdom that only age can bring. Jim said once that it was because they had so much more age to go around than most species, and perhaps that is true. Yet Spock had been marked as that rarest of Vulcans, a maverick, since his youth. If he had returned to Vulcan and conformed to its expectations, it might have become a mere youthful adventure. Even among Vulcans, such were not uncommon. He had never cared to do so, and it had not greatly troubled him that he did not receive the deference of his contemporaries.

Here, he is an unknown. Not all know his history; those who do, know it only in broad strokes. They do not know his history of conflict with his family, his clan, and his people. They know that he is a scientist, and a diplomat, both highly regarded careers that are more necessary to Vulcans now than ever before.

And so he is a respected elder here, a leader of their diminished society. He is a leader guiding his people, rather than a voice from the wilderness. It is more gratifying than he had imagined it would be.

And yet, he would trade it in a heartbeat to be back with his wife and children.

The Enterprise and her crew

Or rather, his reaction to them. The years he served on Enterprise were the best years of his life, particularly once Jim Kirk became his commander and friend. The Enterprise shaped him, and his experiences on it—and the lifelong friends he made there—are always in his thoughts. As Leonard McCoy was known to say, might-have-beens and maybes are the most useless thoughts known to humankind, and it is Spock's experience that this is true of Vulcans, as well. But many things remind him of his friends. Spock is ever conscious of what Jim would say, how Leonard would tease him, how his crewmates would react to any given situation.

Seeing their younger alternates, ready to embark on their mission, has stirred up many memories, both cherished and painful. He misses them more now than he has in many years. But he has no desire to attach himself to Enterprise and sail with them through the vastness of space. He is not now the same man he was when he did so; they are not the same people he knew. Spock is content to wish them well on their journey and watch from afar.

Spock would sacrifice much to return to his home. But, and this is the most surprising thing of all, he finds he is content on the new Vulcan homeworld as he never was on Vulcan itself.

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