

"THE FINAL PLAIN"

A suggested plot line for introduction
of Mr. Spock in STAR TREK II

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There is a place in the deserts of Vulcan, called the FINAL PLAIN. It is a testing ground. The final testing ground, for the accomplishment of the highest level of Vulcan achievement. Pure rational thought. In this place, teacher and student are one. Those who feel that they are ready for the training and the final test must also have reached the point in their evolution when they feel that they are ready to be their own teacher and their own judge.

The test is simple. Vulcan has no moon and the nights are the deepest black of blacks. One mile apart across a flat stretch of plain, two poles protrude from the ground. Question: Can the individual walk the mile in daylight when both poles are visible, and then in the black night of Vulcan retrace his steps back to his starting place within the same time limit and without straying from the line?

This was the goal that Spock set for himself when he left the space service after the five year mission of the Enterprise was completed. His idols had done it before him. The names represented a list of men who had achieved complete mastery of thought and body. The power of their minds were such that they could control bodily functions and demands at will. Through a period of long and severe training they had achieved awareness of every impulse, every message that the brain sent to the body and the body to the brain. Through rational and logical thought

they had learned to sort out the useful from the useless; the noble from the vulgar; the rational from the emotional. The prize was the purest form of thought uncluttered by mundane needs, pressures, desires and demands of the ego or the flesh. The mind became a sensory apparatus which could not only accomplish this sorting process, but could store and retain for future use, every nuance of thought, every move of every muscle for rational and productive use in the future.

The first step of the process consisted of one year of absolute silence in the absence of other beings. No sound was to be uttered or heard. The goal during that period was to develop the ability to deal with the inner voices which speak to all of us. Some of them useful, some of them destructive. The concept being that verbalization and sensory reception too often function as an escape or serve to drown out the voices which are internal. Simply listening only to the inner voices is the first step. Sorting out the positive from the negative, the constructive from the destructive, requires the step by step construction of an internal mechanism for weighing and measuring the source of the thought and its relative value.

At the end of the year, the trainee is permitted to return to society.....there to judge for himself whether or not he is prepared to withstand the pressures and tensions which are imposed upon him in any social environment.

*Let me speak ~~has~~ without the pressure to speak.
What motivates for this step? Simply to perfect
self control?*

Vulcan has long been known as a center for rational thought.

We know the history. A once violently emotional people who decided to save themselves from self-extinction by eliminating emotion. This is a process of suppression. Vulcans are not robots. Some Vulcans are therefore more Vulcan than others.

The difference is in the degree to which they have achieved mastery over emotions. Therefore a Vulcan coming back out of the plain, after the year of silence, would find himself subjected to the needs of some, the pressures of others, to satisfy their goals, their concerns, their views. Can he sort out through the use of his newly developed apparatus, that which is the logical path? Or are there still vulnerabilities which make him subject to the needs of his own body or ego or those of others? This he must decide for himself. If he is not ready, back to the desert for more training, discipline and preparation and once more into society to test the results. On the other hand if he is ready he may at this point put himself to the final test, the test of the FINAL PLAIN.

This is the Spock that we discover in STAR TREK II. He has done the year of silence after two years of teaching at the Vulcan Institute of Technology. That time was spent to give Vulcan and Vulcan students the benefit of his experiences on the Enterprise. Then the year of silence, a year in society, during which he decided that he was not ready for the final plain. Several months of preparation, another year of silence

and then back into society, this time successfully. Able finally to deal successfully with the pressures and demands of friends, relatives, peers and his own basic needs.

Now he is about to set out to test himself on the Final Plain. Can he make that walk...once, in daylight and can his brain record successfully every foot step; every muscle movement; every sense of pace; every footfall; can he record, to be reused, every sensation in his thighs, buttocks, pelvis, torso, arms, shoulders, neck and head? Can he then in total blackness repeat the process going in the opposite direction and arrive at his starting point knowing that the achievement was an act of will and not of accident? Blind men can find their way from home to market and back as a result of constant repetition, landmarks, sounds, and the occasional help of strangers. Repetition is the key. The Vulcan in this test functions without that help. One time, and one time only, in one direction, and then attempt the journey back. If achieved to his own satisfaction he is master of himself. What more could any being ask?

And now as Spock travels across the desert to the starting point, he becomes aware of a call.

Somewhere in that portion of his being which has become so attuned, so sensitized to contact, something has been touched.

The tiniest signal has been received and amplified through his receptive senses. It is enough to stop him where he stands. It forces him to listen. What is the call? Is it something that drifts out of the past history of the Vulcan planet? Is it some unanswered question that hangs over his society? Is it a promise made by him or some member of his family waiting to be kept? Is it loyalty, is it science or a friend in need? It sounds again in his brain, this time with a specific voice, like a sound at once present and at once primitive it whispers "....Come....Spock....Come....Spock.... Spock....Spock....Come".

Barefooted, Spock stands, listens, and thinks. The breeze that blows across his face causes his serape-like cape to flap gently around him. And now he wonders. What is real? He has heard legends told about men in similar circumstances. Men who have become so highly attuned, so close to the final exalted position of pure thought that their very sensitivity made them prey to the demons of deception. The voices of the dark-gods, hang over from the negative past, had been known to seduce even the strongest minds in order to prevent them from reaching goals of purity. Could this be what Spock had heard, or was it in fact a call that must be catered to at the expense of the test of the Final Plain?

He made his decision. He would move on to face the task that he had set for himself. If the call came again perhaps it would come in a form that was more recognizable as positive or destructive.

Finally he arrives at the starting place. An hour is spent in mental preparation standing perfectly still facing in the direction of the walk he will take. The process is similar to preparing a computer for the receipt of information which it will store and play back on command. And now the walk begins.

On an exterior wall in the courtyard of the MINDS OF THE MASTERS hangs a simple wooden board studded with pegs. From a number of these pegs hang individual pendants on short lengths of leather thong.

The pendants are simple flat stones on each of which is inscribed the name of an individual who has passed the test of the Final Plain. One such stone hangs with the inscription to the wall. The back is blank. In this way the people of Vulcan are aware that an individual has put himself to the test. Before making his trip to the Plain, Spock had carefully scraped his name on a flat stone and hung it face to the wall. If the test is completed successfully he will return to the city and turn the stone face out revealing his name. If he fails he will take the stone from its peg.

Spock is walking. The pace is leisurely, for Spock has chosen the equivalent of two hours of earth time in which to make the crossing. The choice is a complicated one. Moving too quickly might create too fast a feed of information to the brain-computer center. Moving too slowly extends the period of time during which the brain is in fierce concentration and might therefore deplete the energy. Spock has chosen the two hour pace after evaluating the ability of his own brain to capture the myriad signals while avoiding the exhaustion of too long an ordeal.

The initial walk is on a line due south. The mind records the number of steps, the length of the stride, the effect of the gentle pressure and direction of the wind. All of course, to be played back on the return walk.

The walk is completed, and Spock stands silently facing in the direction of the return. It is dusk, he must wait until darkness. The time must be spent passively so as not to disturb the stored memories. Spock relaxes his brain into a trance-like state to avoid disruption. The light gradually fades until the blackness surrounds him and he is no longer able to see his own hand.

Now he begins to move. The brain circuitry is operating perfectly. The messages coming back strong and clear. The stride is steady and the direction is sure. The wind has shifted and picked up in intensity and like an automatic pilot the brain makes the proper compensations. An hour has passed and as the wind picks up even more it whistles through Spock's clothes and through his ears. And now it seems to say, "Spock...Spock.". He walks on fighting the distraction and concerned that it might have upset his sense of direction. And then again as the wind grows even stronger.....
"Spock...please come."

If he had heard that voice during his years on the Enterprise he would have known immediately that Captain Kirk was calling for his presence. Here on the sands of Vulcan, the voice was out of context.

Only a half mile left to go and this task would be complete. But the wind grows stronger and so does the call. A decision must be made. Either a cold, ruthless exorcising of the call or succumb to it. It is impossible for him to continue this way. The task

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being what it is, the winds being what they are, the demand on his entire being so great that he cannot continue to serve both the call and the task.

Three or four more steps and Spock comes to a halt. He stands for a long moment, turns to the left and walks off the path into the direction of a space station six miles away.

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Spock's arrival on the Enterprise could be totally unexpected by Kirk and his crew. A small shuttle craft approaches the Enterprise which tries to warn it off for its own safety. The Enterprise is in jeopardy and makes an effort to keep the shuttle craft from entering this dangerous territory. The shuttle craft comes on relentlessly without responding to the warning from the Enterprise until the Enterprise is forced to grasp it in its tractor beams and bring it aboard. Once aboard, Spock, without identifying himself requests to be presented to the Captain.

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Of course the crew and especially Captain Kirk are delighted at his arrival. But it is not the Spock they expected. This Spock is detached from their concerns. He is far more interested in the scientific phenomenon that is taking place. The former First Officer would have translated that curiosity into useful advice and action. Spock will do no such thing. The role that he has assumed is that of an objective observer in a life and death struggle with no relationship to either side. He is purely fascinated by the confrontation as a matter of scientific importance. As to the outcome, "What will be will be". Even should the Enterprise and all aboard be destroyed, Spock would spend the final moments collecting data and concerning himself with methods for transmitting that data back to Vulcan.

Some continuing possibilities

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Since we have a Spock who is detached and yet agitated as a result of the interruption of his Final Plain trial, the possibility for a confrontation between himself and Vejur is presented. In a sense Spock takes on the confrontation to achieve the proper ends but for reasons of his own. What starts out as scientific curiosity and inquiry resolves itself in a test equivalent to the one that he left behind.

The final question is, can Spock deal successfully with the threat of Vejur and in so doing justify turning his stone pendant face outward?

Frank Fralick Sept 7