

= The Survivor (Star Trek : The Animated Series) =

" The Survivor " is the sixth episode of the first season of the American animated science fiction television series Star Trek : The Animated Series . It first aired on NBC on October 13 , 1973 , and was written by James Schmerer and was directed by Hal Sutherland . Schmerer pitched an idea for an episode to producer D.C. Fontana called " The Chameleon " , and together with the series creator Gene Roddenberry , it was developed into the final script .

Set in the 23rd century , the series follows the adventures of Captain James T. Kirk (voiced by William Shatner) and the crew of the Starfleet starship Enterprise . In this episode , the crew rescue a shapeshifting alien called the Vendorian from a damaged spacecraft who has disguised himself as a missing philanthropist . Once on board the vessel , he transforms himself into Captain Kirk and tries to take the ship into a Romulan trap . But after falling in love with Lieutenant Anne Nored (voiced by Nichelle Nichols) , the Vendorian saves the Enterprise and Kirk agrees to take his actions into account .

Schmerer and Roddenberry disagreed over some of the changes to the script , as the writer wanted to avoid repeating things that had previously been seen in Star Trek : The Original Series . Critics felt that the episode was similar to those of The Original Series , and was considered one of the best episodes seen in The Animated Series by Chris Cummins of the website Topless Robot . " The Survivor " was adapted into a novelization by Alan Dean Foster and was released on several different home media formats .

= = Plot = =

On stardate 5143 @. @ 3 , while patrolling near the Romulan Neutral Zone , the Federation starship Enterprise finds a small private ship manned by a Vendorian , an alien species that can transform its shape at will . The alien dupes the crew on board the Enterprise into thinking that it is actually Carter Winston (voiced by Ted Knight) , a Federation citizen and philanthropist who has been missing for five years .

Once aboard , the Vendorian renders Captain James T. Kirk (voiced by William Shatner) unconscious , takes his form and orders the helmsman , Lt. Hikaru Sulu (voiced by George Takei) to steer the Enterprise into the Neutral Zone , where Romulan warbirds lie in wait . When the real Kirk eventually regains consciousness , he orders the Enterprise to get out of the Neutral Zone at Warp 8 . The Vendorian who has been shapeshifting himself into other members of the Enterprise 's crew eventually reveals itself to Lieutenant Anne Nored (voiced by Nichelle Nichols) , Carter Winston 's fiancée who serves as a security officer aboard the Enterprise ; the alien further states that the real Winston is dead but , because it has absorbed Carter 's feelings for her , it can love her .

Around this time , the Romulans attack the Enterprise , and the Vendorian ? realizing that his actions have placed the ship in danger ? decides to betray his Romulan masters for love . He takes the form of the Enterprise 's main deflector shield and the Romulans retreat . The Vendorian is arrested and would face trial but Kirk informs him that his actions to protect the Enterprise would be taken into consideration . Nored informs the Vendorian that it is very similar to Winston in personality and she offers to return to Earth with the alien . When Chief Medical Officer Leonard McCoy (voiced by DeForest Kelley) jokes that if the Vendorian had turned himself into a second Spock " it would have been too much to take " , Spock (voiced by Leonard Nimoy) quickly replies that " two Dr. McCoy's just might bring the level of medical efficiency on this ship to acceptable levels . "

= = Production = =

" The Survivor " is writer James Schmerer 's only credit in the Star Trek franchise , whose other genre work consisted of two episodes of the television series Wonder Woman as well as a single episode of Buck Rogers . He was better known for his work on soap operas such as General Hospital and Another World . He pitched stories for Star Trek : The Animated Series on the basis

that the show targeted an adult audience similar to *Star Trek : The Original Series* and not children . He knew it was going to be broadcast on Saturday mornings , but would be unhampered by restrictions on live @-@ action television . He later said " that was one of the reasons why I took it , because I 'm not an animated writer ... I had written a couple of animated shows through the years , and it was like pulling teeth . " He explained that he wrote the script for " *The Survivor* " as if it was a live @-@ action story ; it was originally known as " *The Chameleon* " . The title was eventually changed in order to preserve the plot point as a surprise for the viewer .

He had known producer D.C. Fontana for several years , and pitched his story directly to her . In turn , she relayed it to the franchise creator Gene Roddenberry , who called Schmerer back for a meeting . Together they re @-@ wrote the story during the meeting to make it fit within the 30 minute long animated episode . Schmerer explained that Roddenberry appreciated the idea of an alien pretending to be other characters , and that the animated series could easily show the shapeshifter undergo the various changes in the episode . The design of the Vendorian had been described by Schmerer in the script , but was changed to the squid @-@ like design by the animators , a change that Schmerer described as " neat " and " clever " . In the original outline , the Vendorian didn 't assume the role of Kirk . Added by Roddenberry , Schmerer did not agree with the change . Roddenberry and Schmerer argued about the point , with Roddenberry saying that Kirk was the star of the series while Schmerer wanted it to be different as he was concerned that its plot would appear too similar to the events of " *Whom Gods Destroy* " where Garth of Izar changes his appearance to become Kirk .

= = Reception and home media release = =

" *The Survivor* " was first broadcast on NBC on October 13 , 1973 . Edward Gross , the senior editor of *Cinescape Magazine* , rates " *The Survivor* " as " an above @-@ average episode " that " definitely has the feeling of a live @-@ action [*Star Trek*] show . " Marc Altman compared it to other similarly @-@ themed episodes such as " *The Man Trap* " , which featured a shape @-@ changing alien and a lost love , and said " the shape @-@ changing alien is a familiar genre (and Trekkian trope) , the romantic twist in which the Vendorian spy betrays his Romulan masters for love is a nice surprise . "

Michelle Erica Green , in her review for *TrekNation* , found that the voice work was distracting due to the similarity between William Shatner 's and Ted Knight 's voices ; as well as having Nichelle Nichols voice a different character . She also thought that the alien looked silly , and felt that the plot had been reused from " *The Man Trap* " . In 2012 , Chris Cummins listed the eight best episodes of *The Animated Series* for website *Topless Robot* . He praised the writing of Schmerer , saying that the episode felt like an episode of *The Original Series* , and placed it as the third best episode of the series . The episode was given four out of five stars in *Star Trek : The Complete Manual* by *SciFiNow* magazine .

Alan Dean Foster expanded the episode into a novelization , adding such scenes as a Christmas party . It was released as part of *Star Trek Log Two* , published in September 1974 . The other episodes adapted in the same work were " *The Lorelei Signal* " and " *The Infinite Vulcan* " . " *The Survivor* " was released on LaserDisc as part of the series set . The first release of *Star Trek : The Animated Series* on DVD was through fan @-@ made productions . The official DVD release was on November 21 , 2006 in the United States , a single release containing all episodes from both seasons of the television show .