

The Atlantic

P.S.

Last week, I wrote about the 40th anniversary of *The Day After*, the 1983 made-for-TV nuclear-war movie that scared the bejeebers out of millions of people, including President Ronald Reagan. I am not going to suggest more atomic-bomb pop culture this week, but I do want to note that if the farmer's wife in the film, played by Bibi Besch, seems familiar, it's because you also saw her a year earlier in a film that celebrated its 40th anniversary last year: *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.

If you're not an aficionado of movie trivia, you might not realize that *Star Trek II* was also directed by Nicholas Meyer, who labored under immense strain to get *The Day After* to the screen in one piece. (He discussed his fights with the ABC network in this fascinating podcast interview.)

Anyway, let me put in a word for every *Star Trek* stan in the world: *Star Trek II* saved the franchise, and it's wonderful, even if you don't like *Trek* stuff. William Shatner and Ricardo Montalbán reprise their roles from a 1967 episode of the original TV series, and these majestic hambones engage in a scenery-chewing competition for the ages. The movie has a great plot that boils down to a submarine chase in space, and the dialogue—"He tasks me! He tasks me, and I shall have him!"—has provided me and my friends with repeatable lines and memes for four decades.

— Tom Nichols