

Episode 1.17

Dark Frontier

All she could hear was the sound of countless voices speaking and shouting inside her head, jumbled, overlapping one another. An hour ago she was looking forward to seeing Earth but now all she wanted was to go home and see her parents again. She desperately tried to tune the voices out, no longer could she hear her own thoughts through the noise. Then they disappeared. Everything was quiet.

Morgan opened her eyes. She groggily checked her surroundings as they sharpened from a tired blur. In seconds she was back on Voyager, apparently safe and sound. She stepped out of her alcove.

"Regeneration cycle incomplete," the computer warned her.

"Oh shut up," Morgan moaned. She looked over to the two neighbouring alcoves. Seven was still in hers, her eyes fluttering. Tani's was empty as it usually was. Morgan sighed and she left the Cargo Bay to go and find her.

The Bridge:

"And this one's self explanatory," Tani said from Chakotay's chair.

"Oh be quiet," Harry hissed from Kathryn's.

Tani ignored him and she brought the tricorder closer to her lips as if it were a microphone. "Swore I would never, be that girl holding your hand..."

"Oh please, just shut up," Harry moaned.

"Look at you gazing, acting like your biggest fan," Tani continued while bopping along to her imagined beat.

Harry started to consider calling Security. For the moment he glanced around for help. Typically everyone else were pretending they couldn't hear her, their heads buried in their consoles. "Oh god, I wish I hadn't volunteered for the night shift."

Tani pressed her spare hand against her chest, still swaying from side to side. "Well I don't know how you do it to me. You make my brain just stop..."

"If only," Harry muttered.

The turbolift opened as Tani worked her way up to the chorus. Harry clambered around to beg for help. "Get this weird girl off the bridge and into a soundproof room or something. Please." He was met with Morgan's blank stare which he returned, then he frowned. "Wait, what... what's with all these new kids running around, singing stupid poppy love songs?" he complained.

"There's that noise again," James sighed.

Harry jumped out of his seat. "Finally, an excuse to get away." He ran over to Tactical. "What noise? Is it the Borg, a Security issue. Neelix is cooking again?"

James slowly looked in his direction, but not directly at him. "Great, now it's buzzing around in my ear." He turned back to his station.

"That again? You need some new insults, you idiot," Harry grunted.

"So do you it seems. What about meanie or poopie head," James suggested.

Harry's lips trembled like he was muttering a lot, but no sound came out. He wandered away while still doing that.

"Go in a huff later. Sensors are picking up a transwarp conduit nearby," James said. He noticed someone approach in the corner of his eye, he assumed it was Harry. The sudden and high volume singing in his ear made him jump so far, he nearly bumped his head on the ceiling. Tani only managed to sing something about roller coasters going up before she was dragged away by the arm.

"Ow," she groaned.

"Stop singing! The Borg are coming," Morgan hissed at her, moving the arm holding Tani in order to gently slap the back of her head.

"It's only the Borg," Tani moaned as she rubbed both painful parts.

"Red Alert," Harry ordered.

The turbolift doors opened again, and yet no one stepped out of them this time.

"Don't bother, according to the scanners it's only a probe. I'm more worried about the boss killing me off while I was distracted," James said.

"I'll contact the Captain," Harry said during another eye roll.

"It's okay, I saved recently," James said.

Somebody's head slowly crept around the turbolift door frame carrying a large box under both her arms, her eyes darted around.

"I'm not talking about your dumb video game you dipstick!" Harry yelled.

James struggled not to laugh, "dip what?" Harry groaned.

The turbolift occupier tip toed onto Bridge, immediately ducking down once they reached Tactical so James wouldn't see her as she walked beside it. He only had time to see a blur.

"Still, we're not taking any chances. I'll check with the Captain," Harry said. The person on-route towards the other side of the Bridge shook their head. It didn't seem to work, Harry tapped his commbadge. "Kim to Janeway," his voice echoed from below the Tactical station.

"Shoot," the tip toer whispered. She rearranged her arms, then tapped her commbadge. "Shh, not now, sleeping."

By now everyone else had seen her, James heard her first so he peered over his station. Each person gave her similar funny looks. Morgan more so, with her face turning a little red.

"What?" Harry said.

Kathryn froze so close to her Ready Room. "Um, Kiara sleeping. Shh."

"Um, why does this line sound funny? Almost like..." Harry said suspiciously. He swung around to catch her in the act but she ran off into her office in those seconds. He saw nothing out of the ordinary. "Like she was here."

"Dunno what you mean," James said with a forced confused expression.

The doors to the Ready Room opened again. Kathryn strolled out as if nothing happened with a firm commanding look on her face. "Report."

"Must've been me," Harry muttered to himself. He turned to address the Captain. "A Borg *probe* is approaching."

"Probe?" Kathryn said, glancing around at her ex Borg crewmembers at the rear side of the Bridge. "How do you know, what stupid shape is it? Diamond, hexagon, an upside down triangle, a flat rectangle?"

"Um, it's small, has minimal weapons and..." Tani started to answer.

"Looks like a cube that got lost, flew into a car crusher, and escaped half way through," James replied.

Kathryn stared thoughtfully at the viewscreen. "Hmm, so it's easy pickings."

Morgan's eyes widened in panic. "Mum, we should get out of here."

Kathryn glanced behind her with concern on her features, "why, we've dealt with the Borg more than once. I'm getting a little bored of their frequent visits. We need to do something. This might be the best opportunity we have."

"Uh, opportunity to do what?" Harry asked carefully.

Kathryn smiled at him with a mischievous glint in her eye, one corner of her lips higher than the other. That smile was always trouble for everyone. "You'll see. Senior officers to the Bridge."

"A vessel has been detected... blah blah blah. Activate. Alter course to intercept," the Borg voices said.

A drone stepped out of its alcove and it started to walk towards a computer terminal. It pressed some controls, making the tiny screen change to show Voyager approaching.

"Vessel identified, Federation Starfleet, Intrepid class..." For some reason the voices all gasped, every drone hearing it felt their connection spasm briefly. The voice then turned pretty maniacal, "it's Voyager, destroy, exterminate!"

All the drones looked confused. Since when had they turned into the Darlecks? The voices changed their tone to more of a desperate shout, "do as you're told minions!"

Nothing happened. For a moment all the drones were unsure what to do. "Oh crap, the link has broken again, let me just fiddle with this," the voices grumbled, the volume density of them sounded like they halved. Like someone had flicked a switch the Borg instantly turned to zombies again. "Yes go and exterminate Voyager! Bwahahahahahahaha!"

The first drone seemed to comply and pressed a command on his console, only it changed the view to the starship's bridge.

"Looks more like something you'd find in a Borg toilet," Kathryn was caught muttering behind her.

"We are the Borg. You will be..."

Kathryn turned her head to look at them, "oh, it doesn't look any better inside."

The Borg's voices growls echoed throughout the chamber.

The bridge staff who had been on the bridge earlier tried to keep straight faces. Tom had clearly jumped straight out of bed and ran straight to the helm, as he still wore his ruffled bed clothes and had bed hair that looked like he'd stuck his finger in a power conduit. Chakotay obviously didn't have time

to gel his own hair up, so it was looking a little frazzled around his forehead. Craig appeared to have picked up the first thing he could find and thrown it on, which unfortunate for him was an inside out pair of jogging trousers and a popstar t-shirt with the slogan 'womaniser' written all in caps. To everyone's surprise Tuvok struggled to keep his eyes open, still dressed in his purple meditation robe.

Kathryn did a double take at all of them, her scowl turning fiercer with every person. Typically Tom was the last person she laid eyes on. "I hope this is on purpose to make the Borg think we're stupid, because good job you ninnies."

Morgan leaned forward to look at Craig's t-shirt, scrunching her face. "You look ridiculous," she said bluntly.

"USS Voyager. Resistance is futile," the Borg said.

"Break off your pursuit, or we'll open fire," Kathryn warned.

"Irrelevant," the Borg threatened back.

"What is? You're saying that it is meaningless if you're destroyed? Well if you say so," Kathryn said, gesturing a finger click in Tuvok's direction.

The only response she got was a very quiet throat snort, which only James heard as it happened directly next to him. His eyes drifted to the left, and sure enough Tuvok's head had dropped down slightly and his eyes were shut. "Okeydokey," James said as he got to work.

"You will be assimilated."

Kathryn hinted to Harry to turn the viewscreen went off. He nodded and so it did. It didn't take long for the ship to gently rock from the weapons fire.

The Borg Probe:

A console exploded, two drones fell backwards. A torpedo rematerialised in front of a drone, his eyes bugged out. "Oh shh..." he muttered. The froggy alarm went off.

"Oh what the hell? Don't stare at it, just disarm it," the Borg voices told him.

The drone looked it over, panic continued to build up. "Uh. Affirmative? I will comply. Or whatever." He ended his final word with a tiny squeak as he dipped in his head which part to start with.

"Stupid link, why does it keep doing this?" the Borg complained, once again its voices sounding far less vast than it normally did. Their mood didn't help when the disconnected drone's hand reached forward and got a forcefield buzz in his face for his trouble.

"Screw this. I'm outta here," he said while running off.

Voyager:

The Borg Probe exploded on the viewscreen.

Chakotay swung around towards Tactical. "I thought we were trying to disable it," he stuttered.

His voice startled Tuvok awake, he promptly returned to work like nothing happened. "Yes Commander, arming torpedo."

James quickly grabbed his wrist to stop him, "too late, sleeping beauty."

"What?" Tuvok said. He didn't sound too surprised. A yawn later he was nodding off again.

Morgan looked down at the panel behind the command chairs. "It looks like it went off near the power matrix. Power overload and boom."

"Oops," was all James said in response.

Kathryn glared at him all the way over to Tactical. Meanwhile Tuvok still slept. "Oops? I told you we wanted to salvage the ship." Seven hurrying onto the bridge via the nearby turbolift made her groan. "Great, the day gets better. She's gonna be whining that she should've done it."

"I didn't memorise a probe's specs during my five second Borg stint. Next time I'll get 'em for sure," James said.

"To be fair, at least he was awake," Morgan said.

"Hmm indeed," Kathryn said while delivering a death glare at the sleeping Commander.

James nudged him gently with his elbow. Once again Tuvok woke up a little startled. The first thing he saw was the Captain. "Negative Captain."

"Ugh, it's too early in the morning for this crap," Kathryn groaned and rubbed her sore temples.

"Are there any survivors?" Chakotay asked.

"Negative," Tuvok replied. James double checked to make sure he wasn't sleeptalking.

Kathryn walked towards Harry's console. "Debris status?"

"There's a few components intact but they're badly damaged," Harry replied.

Kathryn turned to face Chakotay. "Begin a salvage operation."

"Captain?" Chakotay said in surprise.

"There must be something we can use; weapons, a transwarp coil," Kathryn replied. She walked towards her Ready Room. "A recipe for a coffee soup." She paused to drool for a moment. Jessie hurried onto the Bridge as she continued on her way. "Oh I feel lucky today."

Jessie looked confused for a bit. She shrugged and walked towards her station. Halfway she caught sight of Tom's static hair and his t-shirt crumpled so much at the back, he looked like he was wearing a massive collar.

"I don't," he muttered, seemingly oblivious to it.

"Nice look Tom," Jessie laughed. "Did you pick it up at the chav store?"

"Nice boyfriend Jessie. Did you pick it up at the useless girly boy store," Tom sniped back bitterly.

Jessie's face turned red with rage, she tried to storm over to him but Morgan and James rushed over to her to hold her back.

"Jess, he's not worth it," Morgan said. James shrugged and released his grip. Before the teen could object, Jessie slipped out of her grasp and ran for the helmsman undeterred. He bolted once she was within punching range.

Morgan slapped James across the back of the head. "Why did you do that for you idiot?"

"What, it's night shift. I don't need to do Security stuff," James smiled. Right on cue Jessie caught up to Tom by running around the bridge in the opposite direction. One kick in the knee ended it in seconds.

"I hate to interrupt but how does the Captain expect there to be anything of use? In the vacuum of space, vessels do not explode. They implode. There should be nothing left," Seven said. Everyone stopped what they were doing and they stared angrily at her.

"No atmosphere outside, did you say?" Morgan asked with a dangerous glint in her eye.

"Of course not, why do you ask?" Seven asked.

Ten seconds later, Seven was floating outside in space amongst the Borg debris. Her expression still the same as it always was when she was explaining things. Meanwhile all Seven haters and J/Cers were cheering and having parties.

"Of course not, why do you ask?" Seven's voice overlapped the image.

Back on the bridge Morgan's attention seemed to be elsewhere as her eyes drifted to the ceiling and a smile appeared on her face. Seven rolled her eyes and walked away from the girl, stepping over the fallen Tom in the process.

Sickbay:

"How many times do I have to tell you Mr Paris. Stop messing with Jessie, she could kill you if there was nobody to stop her," the Doctor said.

"But Doc, shouldn't she have the lecture?" Tom moaned. "She dishes it out but she can't take it, so she resorts to kicking. Very mature."

"I wouldn't have to if you would stop provoking her," the Doctor replied. He closed his tricorder and he walked away. "You're free to go."

"Yeah, thanks Doc," Tom said flippantly as he slipped off the biobed.

"And get changed," the Doctor said.

Tom looked down at himself. "Oh yeah, I forgot about that."

Cargo Bay Two:

The bay was filled with Borg junk. A few crewman were scanning the debris. Kathryn walked in, Chakotay approached her.

"Now, this is how I prefer the Borg," Kathryn said a little too gleefully.

"In pieces?" Chakotay laughed.

Kathryn gave him a dirty look, "no, quiet and boobless."

Chakotay didn't take that too seriously, he kept smiling at her. "Nine hundred kilotons of debris, most of it is core fragments, all in written order," Chakotay said as the pair walked to the middle of the bay.

"Let me guess, nothing useful," Kathryn said whilst turning her head side to side as she walked.

"B'Elanna found a transwarp coil," Chakotay replied.

Kathryn's eyes nearly bugged out, she pursed her lips and inhaled a little. Chakotay swore he heard a quiet ooh come from them. A weird spherical object caught her attention, she picked it up to get a better look. "A Borg beach ball," she casually threw it over her shoulder. Seven chose that moment to walk by. It missed her by a hair. "Yeah right. The Borg wouldn't know fun if it hit them in the face." The spherical object bounced against a console and flew into the back of Seven's head. She stumbled to the floor, dazed and confused.

"Close enough," Chakotay said as he saw the whole thing.

Kathryn didn't and wasn't sure why he said that. "Let's hope that the little slimy pricks get the hint this time. They're getting weirder with every encounter."

"It was only a probe. Next time we might not be so lucky," Chakotay said.

Harry rushed towards them and knelt down beside Seven. "Ohno, I hope you didn't turn that on." He quickly tried to retrieve the sphere thing. It vibrated violently when his hand was about to touch, then it rolled away sounding like it was blowing raspberries at him.

"Dirty pieces of sh..." Kathryn muttered and walked off.

Chakotay frowned at her, then back at the scene nearby. "What?" He watched as Harry chased the object holding a sack. "When was the last time we did anything normal?" he wondered aloud as he followed the Captain.

"By my count we've added at least ten light years to our trip by avoiding the Borg. I'm tired of running away every time we detect a cube," Kathryn snarled. She started fiddling with her commbadge.

"Are we going to add that to our total?" Chakotay asked.

Kathryn snorted in derision, "not on your life Chucko. I'm having trouble keeping track of our distance as it is."

"Yeah well better safe than assimilated I suppose," Chakotay said.

"Hmm," Kathryn replied, now twirling the commbadge around.

"Maybe I should go to Red Alert and get it over with," Chakotay said.

"Commander?" Kathryn muttered.

"You're about to drop one of your bomb shells," Chakotay replied.

"Why do you say that?" Kathryn asked as she started flipping the commbadge up into the air and catching it.

"Well apart from Seven, your pet hate is taking long detours. I was expecting a metaphorical middle finger to the Borg much sooner than this," Chakotay replied.

Kathryn smiled at him warmly, all while juggling her commbadge and a tricorder expertly. "You read me like a book, you dog." She gave him a seductive wink, he grinned in response. Somebody walking past immediately noticed the weirdness and doubled their pace with their eyes wide.

"Why is she fiddling with her commbadge, she's never done that before," they said to the first person they got to. They shrugged.

"Eureka!" the Doctor yelled. He ran up to Kathryn & Chakotay with a severed Borg arm still dripping. Tom followed him looking a little queasy.

"What is that, it's bleeding all over my carpet!" Kathryn snapped.

"This is an arm from a medical repair drone. Laser scalpel..." the Doctor said very fast. He waved the arm around with little care, almost swiping it into the Captain and Commander's faces. "All rolled into one instrument," he said finally.

"No Federation Sickbay should be without one," Tom quipped.

The Doctor beamed, "I know, right!" he said excitedly while spinning around to face him. He underestimated how close he was and promptly smacked Tom in the cheek with the arm. Down he went. "Oh sorry Mr Paris. Anyway this could help me perform surgery. Maybe I should test it on him."

Tom swallowed hard, he quickly crawled out of the room as fast as he could.

"Excellent, why don't you use it on Seven, she didn't look too well," Kathryn said.

The Doctor tried to hide his excitement, despite his concerns for Seven, "as you wish." He hurried away while trying to lug the arm over his shoulder. It slipped from his grasp before he could settle it there, on its way down it conked poor Craig on the head.

"Okay, he's got to be doing that on purpose," Chakotay sighed.

"Probably," Kathryn nodded. Chakotay gestured for her to follow him, he then made his way over to B'Elanna and Morgan working on another piece of debris.

B'Elanna sighed impatiently, "try it again."

Morgan hesitated briefly, she tried once more to activate the piece in front of her. Nothing happened. "Nope, it's fused."

"What's the problem?" Chakotay asked on approach.

"We can't activate the transwarp coil," B'Elanna replied.

Morgan bit her lip nervously while she cast aside the device to B'Elanna to have another go. "It's not a coincidence. The only time we stumbled across a valuable piece in a Borg debris field, it more or less went poof in our hands. I think it's a fail safe."

Kathryn looked a little disappointed, Chakotay instead was momentarily amused.

"Makes sense. The Borg don't want their goodies to fall into the enemy hands," B'Elanna mumbled as she worked.

"At least the Doctor found a new toy," Chakotay smirked.

Meanwhile the Doctor was showing his new arm to Seven, who had magically shook off the sphere in the head incident. She didn't seem very interested, her attention was mainly toward Morgan and B'Elanna, her body inching to get away. He started waving it around again, next thing he knew she was lying on the floor with a Borg arm imprint on her forehead.

"Oh by the way, we found something else," Morgan said. She walked away to another group of debris a couple of crewmembers were still digging through. A few brick shaped objects had been piled to one side. Kathryn and Chakotay followed her over as she picked one up to show them.

"These are Borg data nodes. They could have anything on them from ship positions to what some new drone had for breakfast before the Borg ruined his day," she explained.

Kathryn's face lit up. Her mind raced at what goodies could be on these bricks, she tuned out before the second example. "Then lets take a look."

"It's in Borg language. We need to translate it," Morgan said.

"Time?" Kathryn asked.

"I'd say about three hours," Morgan replied.

"Do it," Kathryn said, sounding so giddy Chakotay thought she misheard and thought Morgan said the data lead to a coffee holy grail. Then he figured Morgan mentioned breakfast and her mind immediately leaped from there.

Morgan walked away with a couple of data nodes. Seven hurried over to her and intentionally got in the girl's way, all while gesturing to the nodes. "I will take care of it. I can do it in two hours." Morgan

kept a tight hold on them despite Seven's tugs, their bodies swayed back and forth for a while before Seven gave up and decided on following Morgan closely to her disgust.

Chakotay shook his head and smirked, having witnessed the whole thing. He turned to Kathryn to find her nibbling on the commbadge with a thoughtful look on her face.

As soon as B'Elanna stepped into Astrometrics she could feel the tension in the room, close to choking point. It also felt a few degrees cooler.

"Irrelevant. I do not require any of your help," Seven hissed whilst trying to reach a certain part of the console. Morgan though was in her way and she clearly wasn't ready to budge.

"What's your problem? I thought you were yay Borg, efficiency is perfection, woohoo team work," Morgan said mockingly.

Seven stared coldly at her, expecting the young girl to flinch. She had obviously forgot she was facing off against a Janeway, as Morgan easily matched the stare. "You are too young and inexperienced to assist me with this. Please," she said the final word with the complete opposite of politeness. Her cold stare ranked up a few levels. "Go home and play with your dolls."

Morgan laughed at her attempt at a deathglare. "That's funny. I thought I already was playing with dolls. You're right, maybe it is time to throw away the old dollhouse into an airlock."

B'Elanna was half tempted to slip back out, replicate popcorn and watch this unfold. She didn't want to miss another second of it though.

"Good, now go," Seven said, turning her attention back to the station and trying once more to push her way in.

"Don't tempt me," Morgan grumbled, standing her ground she continued trying to work.

Seven tried to slide her arm in whenever she could, all while pushing against Morgan's arm with her own. "You are disruptive, interfering and rude. I do not want you in my Astrometrics."

"I found these nodes, mum told me to translate them. I'm not the one who's being interfering, dumb bitch!" Morgan hissed.

Seven looked at her smugly for some reason. "See, rude and disruptive. You are an angry and still immature little girl. I will be able to focus on this task far more efficiently and effectively than you. As I was a part of the collective, I..."

"You're perfect. No flaws, good at everything. I know," Morgan said flippantly.

"Precisely," Seven said passionately.

"Snore!" Morgan groaned and rolled her eyes. She casually shoved the other ex-Borg with her other, not being pressed against arm. Seven fell to the floor with a thud. Morgan shrugged it off and got back to work.

B'Elanna decided now was the time to approach. "I found another node, if you're interested. How's it going?"

Morgan smiled over her shoulder, "good. Mum will be happy to know that there's only one Borg ship around, which is damaged and probably won't come after us. I'd have more if it wasn't for Overcompensating Barbie here."

"So I saw," B'Elanna chuckled. "I'm sure Janeway will want to know more about this ship."

"Figured she might. Just in case," Morgan said with a nod and a relieved sigh.

B'Elanna's laughter turned into the nervous kind. "Oh, not just in case."

Morgan blinked rapidly at her while the rest of her face was blank. "Then why?"

Kathryn walked across from her chair to the wall screen, currently showing an image of a Borg Sphere that looked scorched in places. Her hand gestured to it with flair. "ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Fort Knox."

All she got were blank stares from everyone in the Conference Room, and a couple of awkward throat clearing from two of them.

"Um," Tom of course was the first to speak up. "Fort Knox was basically a vault filled with trillions of US dollars worth of gold. This is a Borg Sphere with scaffolding and workmen still filling the floors with concrete."

"Use your imagination," Kathryn said, her eyebrow twitching with impatience.

"The Borg have assimilated the bank?" Jessie said.

James tried not to laugh, "and that's the real reason why Humans gave up money."

"Shut up, you two don't know what you're talking about, and you're not funny," Tom said.

Jessie glanced to her other side where the Doctor sat. Three arms rested in front of them, one looking slightly more Borg than the other two and thankfully no longer bleeding. She snatched it and threw it across the table at Tom. It hit him in the chest and knocked him flying off his chair. That toppled over on top of him after he hit the ground.

"I beg to differ," she said as if nothing happened.

"That was my toy!" the Doctor screeched. He started to cry. Everyone ignored him.

Kathryn sighed as if she had been mildly inconvenienced. "So, no one would care to translate?" Tom groaned from the floor.

"Tom, get back in your chair," Chakotay said.

"It's from Earth," Harry said hopefully.

"Oh Harry sweetie," Kathryn cooed at him. "We need to get you a new track for Christmas. The I wanna go home one is getting a bit worn out, we don't want you getting anymore derailed."

"Nobody could break into it," B'Elanna suggested.

"Ohno," Morgan groaned as realisation hit her.

Kathryn tilted her head back so she could sigh in the direction of the ceiling. "Finally." With her head back in the original position she forced a smile. "Yes, Fort Knox was a treasure trove, impossible to get into. Many had tried to loot its gold and failed."

"Are you planning a heist?" Chakotay asked with a smirk.

James glanced around the table, looking confused. "Wait, if Borg Knox is so impossible to get into, why are we even talking about it? It's not exactly an encouraging comparison."

"Ohno," Morgan started to panic a little.

Kathryn didn't seem to notice any of the negative responses, she instead smiled and her eyes sparkled mischievously. "I might be. Only we won't be chasing gold. We'll be hunting for a transwarp coil. I think it might be worth more than some ugly coloured overrated metal, don't you?"

"Isn't that stealing though?" Craig asked.

"Stealing is such a strong word, how about borrowing," Kathryn said. Most of the table seemed to agree with her; it was a mixture of smiles and nods. Tom merely groaned, it wasn't clear if he was objecting to anything.

"Tom, I told you to get up," Chakotay said. Tom flipped a finger, knowing full well the Commander wouldn't be able to see it from where he was sitting.

"If I could attach at least one transwarp coil to the engines, it could take at least twenty years off our trip," B'Elanna said.

"Yeah but..." Morgan protested.

"If everyone agrees let's get rehearsing," Kathryn said.

Morgan looked around helplessly. "Wait a min. We've gotten lucky lately. The sphere turning around, the probe, the one that Neelix scared away."

Neelix nodded until what she said truly hit him. He looked on, shocked. "What?" Kathryn shuddered at the memory of the infamous picture of him that scared away a Borg Cube.

"But it wasn't long ago that if it weren't for a wonky temporal anomaly and the Tolg, Kiara would be stuck on a sphere for thirteen years," Morgan stuttered. Kathryn and Chakotay flinched almost at the same time as each other. "Didn't they assimilate one of your shuttles and its crew not long ago? Again you got lucky there."

"Yes, lucky," Jessie commented, her hand absentmindedly reached up to dab her hair.

Morgan shrugged, "well you're not still Borg are you, so yeah lucky. Lucky that some weird glitch cut you both off before they could finish assimilating."

"Exactly like you," Seven said bluntly, her eyes drilled suspiciously at nothing in particular.

Most of the room turned their attention toward her. Morgan scowled without bothering to do even that. "Maybe exactly, maybe not exactly."

"I hate to admit it," Kathryn said hesitantly, pulling a disgusted face. "But Seven brings up an interesting, if not pissy at sharing the mantle, point."

"She does?" Tom stuttered whilst dragging himself up using the table.

"I understand why you're feeling a little anxious, even scared Morgan. I would be too in your position," Kathryn said warmly towards her daughter. It didn't help, she had been tense since the agreeing with Seven comment. "However the last few encounters with the Borg have been strange. They've been talking differently, their tactics have changed, the glitch during James' assimilation..."

"Indeed," Seven said, finally focusing her narrowed eyes at James. He gave her a polite smile back which annoyed her even more.

"Something's changed in the Collective and so far, I like it," Kathryn smiled.

Chakotay sighed, "it might make our heist a touch easier."

"Or harder," Harry commented dryly.

"Do you believe the sphere is damaged enough for us to penetrate its defences?" Tuvok questioned.

Kathryn nodded. "From the data we've retrieved, yes I do. It should be enough to let us in for five to ten minutes. We'd still need to sneak up behind them, or distract them while we loot their things."

"Perhaps we could use the data we have on that ship to recreate it on the Holodeck. Test runs would be useful," Chakotay suggested. Tom's ears perked up.

Kathryn glanced toward her still nervous daughter. "Don't worry, you can sit this one out. I can put up with Seven if needs be."

"Excuse me?" Seven muttered.

"Sphere layout hasn't changed much. I lived on one for thirteen years. I know the way around off by heart," Morgan said. She looked down at her chest as she lightly poked at the left side of it. Her shoulders shrugged briefly and she glanced back up. "You're gonna do it anyway, I'd feel better if I was there helping out."

"Only if you're sure," Chakotay said softly.

Seven's eyebrow shot up, "that will not be necessary. I am fully aware of multiple Borg ship layouts, including this sphere. Morgan's usefulness would be equal to mine at best, and that is not factoring in her fearfulness and impulsive streak."

"I'm sure," Morgan said.

James shifted uncomfortably in his seat before saying something, "if you need a Security person, I can go. I remember a few things that might be useful."

"Even if Janeway called the mission impossible herself?" Jessie asked him.

Chakotay glared at Tom before he could even think of humming the Mission Impossible theme. He quickly shrunk into his chair, until he forgot it was still on the floor. He picked it up instead.

"Fine, it's Fort Knox after a trip through an ion storm, or something," Kathryn huffed. "If our test runs require another team, I'll consider you. For the moment, I think Commander Tuvok is perfect for the job while you man Tactical."

"I agree. A mission of this calibre requires a *cold head*," Tuvok said.

"Cool," Harry whispered to him. Tuvok glanced at him briefly with an exasperated sigh.

Seven briefly smiled while no one was looking at her. "He is correct. That does not describe Taylor, or Morgan for that matter."

Kathryn rolled her eyes while massaging her forehead, "this is my Seven whining headache. I thought the pounding felt like entitlement."

Chakotay quickly thought to remedy the situation. "As the Captain suggests, for now we'll use a minimal party for the tests. Those will help us figure out who to actually bring when the time comes. We will need capable people on the Bridge as well, so..."

"Why is it always like this? I am offering my services to the crew, and you react like it is a joke. Taylor's assimilation and now Morgan are only convenient excuses to do this, when before it made no sense," Seven snapped.

Jessie folded her arms and pouted a little. "Why does she continuously forget me in this?"

Kathryn glanced at her sympathetically, "oh she doesn't, don't worry." Jessie frowned in response.

"I'm serious. I am the perfect crewmember for this job, and yet the fifteen year old girl with a hot head and no true Borg experience is picked over me. The only reason you do it is to try and anger me," Seven said.

Morgan couldn't help but giggle quietly. "Oh so it's got nothing to do with you being all boring and annoying, hmm?"

"I'd call her patronising and pompous, but yeah," James said. Seven stared at him with her usual wide eyed expression. "Oh and a severe case of *only child* resentment."

"I was not asking for your opinion on the matter," Seven sniped back.

Kathryn gently clapped her hands together to get their attention on her. "All right, that's enough. This is getting old so I'll settle this right here and now." She cleared her throat and sat up straight, ready to deliver a speech. "Seven. Shut up."

Seven's jaw visibly flexed as she ground her teeth together. "See, you're doing it again. The Doctor's on my side, tell them," she said in the Doctor's direction. He wasn't in his chair anymore though, unknown to her he was crawling under the table to retrieve his precious arm. "Why am I the only one who should be shutting up? Taylor always makes a scathing comment toward me, Morgan treats me as you do but worse."

"James does that to everyone, even me," Jessie said lightly. James looked at her with a bemused smile.

"You want to know why I do it? Wanna list?" Morgan asked bitterly.

"Yes," Seven replied with venom.

Morgan smiled as she stretched her arms out in front of her, cracking her knuckles. "Okeydokey. Let's see. You always want to be centre of attention. Ugly catsuit attached to heels. Actually started it with the *you're not Borg enough to be any use, unlike me!* You think you're better than everyone and still have to act Borgy and robot like to be perfect. Make fun of me for my age and my life on the sphere, again not being Borg enough for your tastes. Followed and started shoving me out of the way, or trying to, to do something the Captain ordered me to do. Shall I go on?"

"Oh!" Tom shouted as if he were at a football game and a goal was scored. "And Morgan deals the finishing blow, will Seven be able to pick up the spare?"

"What... what is that? Is it a boxing match or bowling?" B'Elanna asked him.

Seven was temporarily speechless. She had to say something though. "I... it's functional," she said in reference to her catsuit. "I was not mad at you, the Captain only orders you to do what she'd normally give to me, to anger me. Your enabled behaviour because of that..."

Kathryn's eyes narrowed dangerously. Chakotay and Tuvok, who were sitting beside her, quickly budged their chairs away as far as they could. "I beg your pardon!"

"She's got a point," Harry said flippantly. Even the growl he got didn't seem to faze him.

"I erm... It's true and I don't think I'm... Taylor hits me," Seven stammered.

Everyone looked across the table at James who looked as shocked as they did. Everyone but Jessie and Kathryn, who both shared similar looks of indifference.

"Hey, don't say it like that," James protested.

Tom sniggered, "like how then? Slaps, pushes, tickles?"

"It's exactly like that. You're a monster," Seven snapped whilst pointing an accusatory finger at James. "I know who you really are."

Morgan tried to hold it in but she couldn't, she burst out into hysterical laughter. Some of the rest of the table seemed to be struggling as well.

"Yes well," Kathryn said mid chuckle and wiping a lone tear from her eye. "James, if you promise not to pick on Seven anymore, we can get started on planning this heist without all the drama. Okay?"

"It's not funny," Seven said firmly, her bottom lip trembled a little.

James seemed to agree with her for once. He frowned with a hard look in his eye. "Sure, if she stops actually being enough of a Security threat to warrant a *hit*. Fine."

"Good. Tuvok, Kim and Morgan I'll let you know when the program's ready. Everyone dismissed," Chakotay said quickly as he rose to his feet.

Tom sighed in disappointment as most of the table quickly filed out. Once he thought he was alone he felt something rub against his ankle. His eyes widened in horror. Before he had a chance to look down and see what, the Doctor jumped up from seemingly out of nowhere beside him, holding the Borg arm tightly in front of him.

"There we are!" he announced proudly like it was a child.

Tom jumped out of his skin and clambered back in his chair. His commotion made him tumble to the floor once more.

"Oh Mr Paris," the Doctor sighed impatiently. "You're going to be a permanent fixture in Sickbay if you keep that up." He waltzed out, humming contently.

The Ready Room:

"So Morgan, how do you feel about all this?" Kathryn asked.

"I feel great, I showed Seven up in front of everyone," Morgan replied.

"Not about that, even though I am proud of you. I was talking about the Fort Knox plan," Kathryn said.

"Oh that," Morgan sighed uneasily. "Even with the damage to the sphere, we'd have trouble getting there without them spotting us. Someone stealing a coil will be instantly a threat to them."

Kathryn nodded, agreeing with her. "Right now the only plan I have would be to entice them with a shuttle, get them to lower their shields to bring it aboard for assimilation. We slip in then and loot. We'll need more than your directions to help us."

"Why?" Morgan asked.

"We still need to get out in one piece. I'd prefer to do this without them knowing we were there at all. Since you said you've looted Borg ships before and the Borg would've been extra keen to nab the future technology on your sphere, you or Tani must know how," Kathryn said.

Morgan's eyes fluttered anxiously, her body tensed. "Yeah well, some of the time we couldn't even get close to them. We had more luck in debris fields a lot of the time."

"But you know why they went wrong, don't you?" Kathryn asked.

"Sure," Morgan said, though it felt like she was lying.

"I have Seven studying the logs from the ship she was assimilated on. Hopefully together, not too literally, we'll create a workable plan," Kathryn smiled.

Morgan stared at her blankly, "yeah uh, that's not gonna work."

"Well it'll humour her for the time being," Kathryn shrugged.

"No. I mean the Borg assimilated her ship too, right?" Morgan asked. Kathryn nodded. "Then the Borg know everything Seven will get from those logs."

Kathryn smirked, "oh no, I gave her something completely useless to do? What a shame. I'm so upset I never thought of that."

Morgan wasn't sure if she should laugh or complain about encouraging Seven, one way or another. It left her with a half smile and wide eyed look on her face.

"At least we don't have to regenerate tonight. We won't have to put up with Seven crying all night," Tani smiled.

"Yeah I suppose," Morgan mumbled while staring down at the table.

"What's up with you?" Tani asked.

"Last night I dreamt about when I was first assimilated into the collective, it felt a little too real," Morgan replied. "It happening the day we run into them and plan an attack, it doesn't help."

"Just forget about it, it was only a dream. I think we deserve a break, do you want some Cherry Coke?" Tani asked. Morgan nodded. Tani got off the sofa and she headed over to the replicator.

The older girl with a few Borg implants and scars dotted across her face laughed and pointed. "Say something again," she said mockingly.

"Why?" Kiara asked. The girl and two other kids standing with her snorted into more obnoxious laughter.

"You've got a really stupid voice," the boy of the trio laughed.

"Speak for yourself," Tani huffed.

The boy pushed Tani hard and she fell over. Kiara pushed him straight back. Despite being almost twice her size, he stumbled backwards onto his butt.

The other two girls laughed at her for it, despite the boy's humiliated blushing and huffy reaction.

A much older boy no older than thirteen rushed over to the five children. He helped the boy up by grabbing one of the thick wires across his back. It didn't hurt him, but he whined anyway.

"Don't ever push my little sister again, do you understand me?" he snarled.

"Okay, okay," the boy said quietly.

The older boy shook him gently. "I didn't hear you!"

"I said okay. Sorry Boss," the boy moaned. The older boy put him down, allowing him to run off into the vast corridors outside.

"Thanks Tiran," Tani said.

"No problem little sis," he said.

The two remaining girls didn't look impressed. One of them huffed, "you were too mean. Are all Humans so violent and stupid?"

The other girl giggled quietly, "stupid head."

Tiran glared at them and they ran away screaming, which because of the empty and giant Borg sphere, it echoed around, increasing its volume.

"I hate kids," Tiran muttered, earning him two blank stares from Kiara and Tani. He laughed and reached out to pat his little sister's head. "Except you two, duh."

"I gotta go. If they give you anymore trouble you have permission to do more than push them, okay Kiara?"

That put a smile on Kiara's face at last. "Oh, really?"

"Yep. Have fun. I'm off to another broken ship, so you be good. Okay?" Tiran said with a wink.

"Okay, see you later," Tani grinned.

Tiran left through a different door to the other kids.

The girls from before didn't wait long until they sneaked back in and started teasing Kiara again.

"Morgan, are you still there?" Tani asked as she waved her hand in front of Morgan's face. She jumped suddenly and stared oddly at Tani.

"What happened?" Morgan asked.

"What do you mean?" Tani asked.

"I was back on the Borg Sphere, ten years ago," Morgan replied.

"I think this work is getting to your head, you'd better get some sleep," Tani said, deciding to keep the second small bottle of coke to herself.

"It seemed real," Morgan muttered to herself.

Tani smiled at her, "yeah yeah, you do realise the flashback one has been and gone, right?"

"Don't," Morgan shushed her. "Mum hates it when we talk fourth wall-y."

"Yeah yeah. We've figured enough ideas out for them tomorrow. We can take a break if you want," Tani said.

Morgan nodded. She stood up to leave.

It didn't take her long to get back home. As she expected the quarters was in complete darkness. No one was home. She ordered the computer to put the lights on low and settled herself on the sofa with a drink.

There wasn't much to do besides wait, all while her stomach complained over and over that it needed feeding. She couldn't wait much longer. It was clear that she'd be on her own for the night. It happened all the time, but still she felt annoyed, she couldn't help it.

Morgan sat at the table to eat her dinner in eery silence.

A couple of hours later she curled up in her bed. The light from the living area peeked through the tiny crack in the door. She hated turning it off when she went to bed, it reminded her that the quarters was empty and the feeling that gave her made her very uneasy. Vulnerable for some reason.

Despite how low the light was and how little was coming in, it may as well have been bright sunlight shining into her room. As always, she ducked under her quilt and rolled over so her back was facing it.

"What's wrong K, are you too scared to step on the scary Borg ship," a familiar but far away voice taunted her.

The sound of it startled her eyes open wide, Morgan quickly sat up to see where it was coming from. Nothing in the room had changed.

"Computer, is there anyone else in these quarters but me?" Morgan asked.

"There is nobody else inside these quarters."

"Then where did the voice come from?" Morgan stuttered.

"Please restate the question."

"I'm not afraid of any Borg ship, I do live on one after all," she heard herself say.

Her body started to tremble. Bringing the quilt up to wrap over her shoulders didn't ease her one bit. "I didn't say that, what's going on?"

"Please restate the question."

"Then why aren't you coming with us then?" Tani's voice asked.

"I just don't want to," her own voice answered.

Morgan shook her head rapidly as she moved to lie back down, this time facing the door. The light was annoying but she hoped it would keep her grounded in reality.

As she settled her head down she noticed something in the corner of her eye. It only registered at the last second, she hurriedly sat back up to look over shoulder toward the window. The sight that greeted her punched her hard in the chest, over and over. The imposing spherical object loomed closer until it dwarfed the window.

"You're not scared, are you?" another familiar voice taunted her.

"No I'm not!" her own voice cried stubbornly.

Morgan closed her eyes and tried to cover her ears. "Stop it."

"Oh come on Kiara, those stupid drones won't even notice that we're there at all. Even if they did they would think we were one of them," Tani's voice reassured her.

"I don't care, I'm staying here."

"No..." Morgan wheezed, the sight of the sphere had her struggling to breathe. She had to get out of her room and the whole quarters.

"I knew it. Baby only likes to play pretend tough girl. We'll go without her," the first voice said.

The door bleeped negatively at her and refused to budge. Morgan quickly tried to get any kind of grip on the cracks in the door, but her fingers only kept slipping across. Her efforts became more frantic as frightened screams echoed around her quarters. All of them were young, familiar to her.

"No, they'll discover us," Tiran's voice stuttered in a panic.

Morgan gave up on trying to get a good grip. Instead she slammed the side of her left fist into the door desperately, as the screams were gradually overwhelmed by unified Borg voices.

"We've got to destroy them," Tiran's voice said.

"We can't. That'll get the Borg's attention too. They'll chase us across the galaxy," she heard herself say, only just over the noise.

"At least this way we have a head start," Tiran's voice said.

"No," Morgan whimpered in unison with her own voice echoing around her.

The screaming ended abruptly, but the sound of the collective droned on still. Morgan then saw a blink of green coming from the other side of her quarters. She glanced over to find the wall melting into a Borg one. It spread rapidly to the carpet, the wardrobes, drawers. Once it reached her bed it melted down to nothing, the window beside it morphed into an alcove.

Morgan thumped the door harder with her left, her right scrambled once more to get a grip on the crack. The Borg technology crept closer until it had surrounded her.

"You are mine," a woman's voice hissed in her own mind as it made contact with her feet and hands. She screamed with all her might as it crawled across her skin, her eyes squeezed shut.

When they opened again Morgan found herself back in the living room, looking sideways. Her body weight pressed into something soft. She realised why but it was no relief. Her throat throbbed and her heart thumped furiously. She sat up from the sofa, still shaking with her entire head drenched in sweat.

It wasn't real, she tried to tell herself. Until she noticed the strange spherical object through the window beside her.

The Bridge:

Seven entered the Bridge with her shoulders tense. The sight of a damaged Borg sphere on the viewscreen didn't help matters.

"Looks like it took a real beating," Chakotay commented.

Everyone's eyes instinctively fell onto Kathryn. She frowned at the people she noticed doing it.

"I recommend we keep a safe distance, it could still pose a threat," Tuvok said.

Kathryn nodded, if a bit reluctantly. "Match course and speed, while keeping a distance of ten million kilometres."

"Yes ma'am," Tom said as he began to hurriedly tap on the helm.

"I will kill him," Kathryn whispered to Chakotay.

Tom mouthed a few words first, "we're chasing a Borg ship so we can mug them. Can it get any crunchier than this?"

Kathryn rolled her eyes. "I'm sure I can manage it."

Seven walked over to her usual station and gripped it nervously. "Captain. I had an important flashback that may help this mission. Unfortunately it's made me a little anx..."

"Yeah yeah, I'm sure you did," Kathryn said in a patronising manner. "Make yourself useful and..."

"Check the Borg ship's status?" Seven questioned.

Kathryn scrunched up her face, "no, we have Opps and Tactical for a reason you job hogger. Get me a coffee, extra strong. It's going to be a long day."

Chakotay bit his lip to stop himself from laughing, failing miserably, while Seven quietly fumed. "Kathryn, she might have a better idea about the sphere than Harry and Tuvok would."

"It's a slippery slope Chakotay," Kathryn hissed at him. "Today it's Borg ship statuses, but tomorrow it'll be wrestler cameos and curing murder instincts with nanoprobes."

"That's oddly specific," Jessie commented.

Seven meanwhile tapped away and tried to ignore the conversation. "Their weapons array is regenerating, but shields and transwarp drive are still offline. The latter will be completed in seventy two hours."

"That's nice but I can't drink it," Kathryn said. She glanced toward Tuvok, he gave her a nod. "Fine, we have less than seventy two hours to pull this off. Better get started."

She had barely finished speaking when she hurried for the Ready Room. Everyone assumed to pack seventy two hours worth of coffee and beam it to the Holodeck. Seven hurried after her.

"Captain, I think there may be something useful in my paren..." was all she had time to say before the doors closed in her face.

Chakotay shrugged with a sympathetic look on his face. "I'd give anything to Tuvok to suggest, if I were you."

"But, I can help. Why does she treat me this way?" Seven asked.

"She treats everyone this way. Your problem is you take it as special treatment. You're not, FYI," Jessie replied.

As she was only a few feet to Seven's left, Jessie noticed even with her head mostly down directed at her console, the ex-drone turning on her heel slightly to stare at her coldly with some contempt. Jessie lifted her chin up to smile at her, all while her eyes screamed danger.

"Oh, it's getting a little chilly in here," Tom said, genuinely shivering.

Chakotay nodded. "Yeah. You'll get your chance to help, Seven. It's a big crew, with people sharing similar skills and knowledge. You gotta learn to take some rejection." Seven glanced across, her eyebrow raised. "Look at it this way; the Captain's sparing you from some unpleasant memories being stirred. You'd feel better here."

"Yeah totally," Tom nodded quickly. "She's not doing that for her fifteen year old daughter, but hey. Details!"

Chakotay glared at him until he melted down a few inches and kept his gaze pointed at the helm, never to move again.

Tuvok lead the way down a Borg corridor lined with alcoves, Harry followed closely very nervously. They turned a corner to find two drones heading their way. Tuvok did not flinch, he kept going while keeping his rifle aimed, just in case.

Harry though almost leapt through the ceiling. Tuvok was passing by the pair when a phaser blast knocked one flying. Tuvok sighed while the second drone turned on him.

"Mr Kim," he said.

Harry cringed as the drone started to assimilate the Security Chief. Only the tendrils bounced off his neck. "Sorry."

Take 2:

Kathryn and Morgan entered a small chamber. Kathryn stood guard while Morgan crouched down to retrieve a circular object from a larger one.

Her nerves were making her tremble viciously, the noises she could hear and the surroundings reminded her of the nightmare too much. She grabbed at the device quickly, an alarm blared. The fright that gave her made her pull harder, snapping it clean in two.

Kathryn shrugged casually, "it's okay. We'll get it. Reset program."

Take 5:

Tuvok sighed a little impatiently as he leaned against one wall, with his rifle clutched against his torso. Phaser fire kept going off in the background.

"I swear, that one looked at me!" Harry shouted from the nearby corridor. He knocked down two drones with his rifle before the shields sprung up. He still didn't stop shooting.

Take 9:

"Mum, did you forget something?" Morgan asked.

Kathryn took a long, long sip from a giant flask. Once she was done she sighed contently. "Nope," she said finally.

The alarm began to blare and still Kathryn was not rattled. It wasn't until a drone approached her and tried to assimilate her, accidentally brushing the flask. Her eyes flared up, jaw clenched tightly, nostrils almost puffed out smoke instead of air. The next thing anyone knew, Kathryn and the drone seemed to be wrestling on the floor and it was clear who was winning.

"Keep your slimy mitts off my coffee!" Kathryn screeched.

Morgan could only sigh.

Take 10:

Finally Tuvok and Harry managed to reach their target. Tuvok handed a box to him to his surprise.

"I will stand guard instead. You place the charges," Tuvok said. He pointed to two different spots, "here and there."

Harry took them off him, muttering to himself. He then opened it to retrieve the devices settled inside. Once he placed the first one on the wall he turned to do the other, but he was put off by an approaching not at all Borg like mechanical being.

"Intruders!" the giant fake looking robot from Captain Proton screamed, its arms flailing about. "Surrender!"

Harry groaned, "Tom! You can't be that bored."

Take 12:

"Tom!" Chakotay barked.

Tom yawned while tapping the helm with one hand. "What?"

"Can you at least pretend this is real?" Chakotay said.

Tom's jaw dropped. "Commander, I'm shocked, hurt that you'd think I wouldn't."

"Really, so why does the viewscreen look like that?" Chakotay asked, pointing forward.

The helmsman's face turned a deathly white, he looked up slowly. Instead of the Borg sphere being a still image in front of them, only the edge of it was in the left of the screen, moving very quickly.

Sure enough outside the Borg Sphere had a Voyager shaped blur flying around its epicentre at full impulse power. Or it did until Tom quickly fumbled in the commands to fly it away. It did one spin and a half before it turned around to a stop.

Chakotay sighed in relief. "Thanks James."

James was now sitting at the helm. Tom lay in a heap, mostly sideways, on the floor next to him. "Anytime."

Take 15:

Another Borg drone flew backwards with sparks flying from its chest.

"Mr Kim! Seriously," Tuvok grunted impatiently for once.

"What? It was following me," Harry complained. Tuvok stared at him blankly while the alarm blared, he snatched the rifle from him.

A drone walked up and poked Harry in the neck with the tendrils. He whined, "ow," and swiped it away.

Take 18:

Chakotay's voice rang out over their commbadges, "you're out of time!"

Kathryn's whole demeanour perked up. "Time's up?" she squeaked. The first drone she saw come for her she armed her best glare and snarled, "futile is resistance. No wait."

"Mum," Morgan whined.

"Hang on, that's not right." Kathryn batted away the drone's attempt to assimilate her. "Dodge this. No not that either. I don't comp..." One drone approached behind her and poked her. "Hey, I almost had it!"

Take 21:

A group of Borg drones rematerialised on the Bridge and no one blinked an eye. They began to converge. One drone was smacked in the side of the face with an empty plastic bottle of coke. It looked over to see a very annoyed and tired Jessie sitting at her station.

"Pick it up." It walked over to her, her eyes sharpened. "I said, pick it up and get out!"

"Yikes," Tom stuttered.

The drone actually beamed away in a panic.

James laughed even with a couple drones standing right next to him. "I think this is the only progress we've made in the last few hours."

Chakotay sighed and nodded, "you're not wrong."

Take 23:

A brilliant idea sparked in Kathryn's mind, and so her face brightened up greatly. "That's it!"

"What?" Harry asked wearily. Morgan shook her head rapidly, hinting too late not to encourage her. Tuvok decided it was best to meditate the day away or he'd end up throttling Harry.

"Go back to gel, coward!" Kathryn snapped, pointing at the former Ensign. She burst into hysterics afterwards. He meekly reached up to check his messy, unkempt hair that had fallen from its usual hold.

"Mum, my feet hurt. Can we..." Morgan complained.

Kathryn sniggered as she finished off her latest flask. Once done she tossed it into a sleeping drone. "There's coffee in that Borg's face."

Tuvok doubled his meditation efforts. It was for everyone's safety.

The infiltration team finally walked free from the Holodeck they felt they had been in for days. Well three of them walked, Morgan had to drag her snoring mother by both of her feet. The door tried to close on her head and quickly re-opened once it spotted her.

"How... how does she do it? I saw her drink thirty flasks," Morgan stammered.

Tuvok's eyebrows were already at critical height. "It's a mystery I have often wondered about for many years."

"I'm more impressed she's managed to down them all with only one toilet break," Harry said, dancing a bit as he walked faster. He ended up running off without them.

Seven stood in the Ready Room with a smug look on her face. Kathryn seemed almost ready to drop dead at any moment, nursing her head in her hands while leaning on the table.

"Two minutes goal, and the best we've managed is two minutes twelve seconds," Chakotay said. "I'm not even going to bother with our worst times."

Kathryn only groaned in response.

"The Hansens were able to remain inside a Borg Cube for several hours undetected. It can be done," Seven said.

"Who?" Morgan asked.

Seven didn't even give her a first glance. "I will continue to study their logs. It's painful but I will do what I must to make this mission a success."

"I wonder what else you'd find painful?" Morgan muttered.

Chakotay scolded her with only a stare. "You think your parents' logs have the answer we need? Maybe we should've got you to read them all while or rather *before* we wasted our time."

"Don't make me come over there," Kathryn groaned. She wobbled side to side a bit, "seriously, don't."

"Were your parents assimilated too?" Morgan asked.

Seven tensed at the abrupt question. "You think it is appropriate to ask someone that? You are an awful child."

Morgan smirked for a second before she giggled. "It wasn't meant to be awful. I'm just saying if they were then the Borg will know how already."

"True, but they'd have to know we were there in the first place to counteract the Hansens methods. If we can pull off the low powered approach then we can be in and out without them even knowing about it," Chakotay said.

Morgan's shoulders rose as she tensed. "You're doing the cut power so they think we're irrelevant idea? I hate that plan."

Chakotay tried to exchange puzzled glances with Kathryn, but she was too busy pressing a coffee scented bean bag looking thing against her forehead. "It was what your sphere did during its raids. Your idea."

"No. Tani suggested it, it was her brother's idea," Morgan said. She fidgeted uncomfortably, the nightmare still fresh in her mind.

"Was there a problem with it that we should know about? I doubt Tani would give us this information if it did," Chakotay questioned carefully.

Morgan struggled to remember the mission the nightmare preyed on. She knew it wasn't entirely accurate. Even still, it felt real enough that she couldn't separate the two. The children's cries slowly fading out, drowned out by the Collective tried to distract her. Chakotay walked over to gently wrap his arm around her shoulders. It tensed for a split second until she realised who was doing it. It helped bring her back to reality, she gave him a thankful smile for it.

"We'll think of something else. Normally the Borg ignore ships they deem unworthy of assimilation, not a threat, but they know we're anything but," Kathryn said. "I think the shuttle distraction will have to be our Plan A after all."

"I agree. The future sphere failed on numerous occasions, Morgan said so herself. Since it was crewed by children..." Seven said.

Morgan felt like she had slapped her in the face. It did though help her realise something about her dream which made her a little hopeful. "We were not assimilated though. If any of us were, we'd have been hunted down and integrated into the Collective. They wouldn't have stopped until we were. A Borg sphere from the future would've been like dangling an espresso in front of mum's face and running off with it."

Kathryn's eyes widened a little at the thought.

"True," Chakotay smiled.

"I think... I think it wasn't the sneak up part. It was what the team did over there that got their attention," Morgan stammered, once more the voices crept back.

Seven's eyebrow raised, a curious expression emerged on her face. "You stated that no one was assimilated."

The voices stopped in an instant, Morgan flinched at it. Chakotay could feel her body tense harshly through his arm. "No. Not assimilated. Worse."

Kathryn dragged herself from her chair despite her forehead's throbbing complaints. "Not worse. I can't image a fate worse than becoming like Seven." Seven glared, Morgan managed to laugh lightly. "We can make this work then. All we have to do is not repeat the same mistakes your team did, no problem."

"Then I'd suggest taking Harry off this mission. He's still a little on edge after his time away. Throwing him straight into the thick of it clearly wasn't a good idea," Chakotay said.

"Yes, that's true. Apart from a little mistake in the beginning, he was the one causing most of the trouble," Kathryn said.

Morgan sniggered briefly. Kathryn stared at her accusingly. "Good one mum."

"Oh right, Tom. Most of his antics won't be easy to repeat though, no problem," Kathryn said. Morgan shook her head.

"Uh huh, we still need to choose a replacement," Chakotay reminded them both.

Seven straightened her back and cleared her throat quietly so it wasn't obvious what she was doing. Kathryn glanced toward her looking a little disappointed. Seven knew that meant she was the first choice.

"Fine," Kathryn eventually sighed. "I'll tell Tuvok to catch James up on the training run throughs." She walked out of her office before Seven truly realised what she said.

"What?" she snapped in Chakotay's direction.

"You really didn't see that one coming?" he chuckled.

Seven sighed impatiently, but more at herself than anyone else.

The Cargo Bay:

Morgan stood alone at the console near the alcoves. The room was empty, debris still remained littered all across the floor and on top of every flat object.

The doors opened, breaking the near silence and hum of the alcoves. Kiara hurried in and once she spotted her, ran straight over to her sister.

"Hiya Morgan," she greeted her.

"Why aren't you in bed?" Morgan asked as she pretended to work at the console.

"I had a bad dream, can I stay with you for a while?" Kiara asked.

Morgan frowned, confused to say the least. "What about mum or dad?"

"Mum's back in the holodeck with Jamesie and Tuvie. I think Dad's working on the Bridge. Please can I stay here, I won't bother you," Kiara replied, blinking more than usual and pouting. Morgan recognised this, it was something she used to use on Tani's brother Tiran whenever she wanted to leave the sphere for a while. She didn't realise until now how daft and obvious it looked. Still, her reason for using it was harmless enough.

"Okay," Morgan answered.

Kiara glanced around the room nervously. "It's creepy in here. All Borgy just like it."

"Like what?" Morgan asked.

"Bad dream," Kiara pouted.

A chill flew straight through Morgan, goosebumps quickly rose. "Um, you had a dream about the Borg?"

Kiara nodded, she began to pace around the station. A haunted look on her face. "Borg sphere firing at us. I saw it from my room. I ran, saw Borg people everywhere. Computer shouted Auto Destruct, over and over."

Morgan's face drained the more she spoke, Kiara continued seemingly unaware of this. "Somebody grabbed me. They chased. I ended up in a small room on my own, then the icky green transporter got me. Borg men standing in a room like this. I tried to run but they got me."

Morgan was trembling by the time she was done. Every detail she gave had punched her over and over again. "Please go home," she stuttered in a panic.

Kiara walked up to her calmly, undeterred that she had upset her. "What's the matter?" A nanoprobe pierced through her cheek. She didn't even blink at it, she merely stared up at her.

Morgan backed away as the whole Cargo Bay faded away and morphed into Engineering. Crewmembers were running around everywhere. One bumped straight into her.

"Craig?" Morgan said once she turned and recognised him. "What's going on?"

Craig didn't look as surprised as her to see her there. Fear seemed to be distracting him. "We're evacuating the ship, didn't you hear?"

"But, why?" Morgan asked.

Craig gave her the same blank stare Kiara did. "The Borg are attacking us, you know that sphere that assimilated you."

"What? How is that possible?" Morgan cried out.

Craig shook his head before glancing around frantically. "It finally caught up with us. I bet that damaged one was a lure. We've got to go..."

A deafening bang ripped through the whole of Engineering. Smoke quickly settled over the lower floor. Morgan tried to look up but couldn't through it. She ran for the ladders by the core, Craig hurried after her.

Three quarters of the way up she saw the source of the bang. Fires, blackened consoles, some twitching and the rest still bodies lay across the floor. Two of which she recognised even through the blackened soot and burns over their faces.

"Mum, dad!" she screamed as she scrambled onto the ground and ran for them. Craig couldn't stop her, all he could do was chase.

Straight ahead of them the door opened. A small figure stood there, shaking for a few seconds. A toddler's cries filtered over as the figure ran off.

Morgan tried to follow but everything, even the drifting smoke froze.

"You can't stop her," a woman's voice whispered.

"Who are you?" Morgan asked, her voice still trembling.

"I am the Borg. Six of Twelve, secondary adjunct of Unimatrix 005, you have become weak," the voice said.

Morgan looked around to find the source of the voice. Confusion set in for the moment. "What? I never even reached the maturation chamber, how could I have..."

"The nanosecond you were assimilated you were one of us. Always shall you be. Our thoughts are one."

"My neural transceiver was fried when the link was severed. I don't believe you. This is a dream, another nightmare," Morgan stammered.

The voice chuckled maliciously all around her. *"Your dreams, a primitive but useful tool. Easy to manipulate, if a bit more vivid than a direct link."*

Morgan breathed in deeply, struggling to keep any of the fear and anger at bay. "You've been trying to reach me for days. How..."

"We know about Voyager's plans to infiltrate this sphere, it will fail," the voice said.

Morgan scoffed upwards, anything to keep her mind and eyes off the ground and the frozen bodies. "I dunno what you're talking about. Mum's sick of you always hounding us, why would we go looking for you?"

"We've come to make you an offer. Join the collective, serve at my side and we'll spare Voyager," the voice said.

"Why me? Why don't you take Seven, no one on this ship likes her and she's more yay Borg than anyone," Morgan asked.

"We're not that desperate. Besides, you are a unique specimen. Too tempting to res..." the voice said.

"Morgan, Morgan, wake up!" another more familiar voice shouted.

Her body shuddered, eyes sprung open to find her mother staring back at her, worried and grasping her shoulders. Morgan looked around to find that she was sitting on the sofa. Then she remembered walking to these quarters, with Kiara. She walked her home. The Cargo Bay felt a little fainter than it did. The images of Engineering stubbornly tried to remain.

"I hope you don't make a habit out of this. Last time I dozed off on this thing I woke up buried in seat and back cushions. Felt like I was being eaten alive," Kathryn smiled.

Morgan stared at her. "What? How long have I been here?"

"I don't know, I've only just come home," Kathryn replied. "Are you okay? You were tossing your head quite a bit."

"I'm fine, I had a bad dream that's all," Morgan quickly lied.

"Maybe have a glass of warm milk, then bed. That's an order," Kathryn said with a mild chuckle.

Morgan nodded and made her way over to the door. She stalled before going through it. "What time's the heist tomorrow?"

Kathryn's brow furrowed slightly, she sighed. "About that. Since James will be in the team, we need someone at Tactical in case the Borg attack. I nominated you."

That knocked any remaining sleep out of Morgan. Her head shook over and over. "What? But I'm in the team."

"I'm sorry, but I had no intention of ever letting you on that ship," Kathryn said firmly. Morgan stared with her jaw quivering and some anger in her eyes. Kathryn understood that perfectly and she expected it. What she didn't was the blood draining from her daughter's face. "You're only fifteen Morgan. Most of your life's been on a Borg ship. It was an easy decision."

"But, why would you bring me on the Holodeck test runs if I was never going?" Morgan asked.

Kathryn smiled weakly at her, "would you want to spend all day with Seven in her element?"

The dread truly sunk in, Morgan felt like she'd drop to her knees at any moment. "She's going in my place?" Kathryn shrivelled up her nose as she nodded. "Mum no, we've ran through the plan so many times, I know it by heart. She hasn't."

"You didn't object to James going, he's in the same boat," Kathryn said as if she was going to throw up for some reason.

Morgan saw that as a ray of light. "See, you can't even stand the thought of her going with you. I've done this before, I can do it again."

"You're putting words in my gags," Kathryn said flippantly. "I only thought putting James and Seven in the same *boat* was incredibly cruel."

Morgan wasn't completely buying it. "Yeah sure mum. Seven may have some knowledge, but I've stolen from Borg ships before. I lived on one as an individual. As kids we played hide and seek that would last for days, no exaggeration. James seems sneaky enough, but Borg wise he told me his connection lasted all of five seconds..."

"Like yours," Kathryn said.

Morgan clenched both of her fists over and over, the panic she was feeling was threatening to spill. "Please listen to me. I said I lived..."

Kathryn reached out to brush her cheek gently. She immediately felt how tense she was. "I know, but you're still my baby girl in my eyes. Literally in a sense. The idea of sending my young daughter to that hellhole. I have no word for it. No wait, I do. It'd be pure fanfic."

"What?" Morgan said, blinking more than usual. "No, Seven will jump sides first chance she gets. You know..."

Kathryn shrugged with indifference.

"Oh fine, you want that. What about James? He'd be more useful at Tactical or Opps than me, I've never used either," Morgan said.

"That's true," Kathryn said tiredly. Usually it was her that was the stubborn one, or at least the most stubborn. Now she knew what it was like for everyone else to argue with her. Kathryn quickly changed tactics. "Why is it so important that you go? You didn't even like the thought of this heist."

"I... I don't want anything to happen to you, dad, Kiara, or anyone really. Not again. I... I don't want to see *that* again," Morgan stammered, her features darkened as she spoke. "Please, I'm the best one for the job."

Kathryn studied her carefully. Finally she sighed. "All right. You never leave my side, understand?"

"Yes. If I do; grounded for life," Morgan replied with some relief.

Kathryn nodded, "you're damn right."

Captain's Log Supplemental: Operation Struck By Lightning Fort Knox is ready to proceed. To give us an extra edge, and hopefully the twelve plus seconds we need, we've taken a page from the Hansens Borg Heists for Dummies book, and replicated a device called the Bio-Dampener for each member of the team.

I've given two to Seven, just to be safe. I suppose she won't stand out too much in the bright sparkly purple catsuit on a ship filled with idiots in catsuits, but we can't take any chances here.

Tensions were sky high on the Bridge. Everyone kept at least one eye on the viewscreen, on it a shuttle loomed in close to the huge Borg Sphere.

"They're still ignoring it," Tom reported.

Chakotay stared ahead, deep in thought over what to do.

"How about a phaser shot across the sphere's bow?" Harry suggested. "Might grab their attention."

Tom smirked to himself. "It's that line of thinking that got you here instead of there, Har."

"And yet he still hasn't learned anything," Jessie commented.

Chakotay nodded, "no phasers. We need to get them to lower their shields."

"It's a generic shuttle barely out of its warp nappies. To the Borg it's a crumb lying on its plate, they were never gonna bother with it," James said.

Tom looked over his shoulder all while turning his chair slightly around, his face scrunched in disgust. "Got anymore useless metaphors over there, smart guy?"

"If it were the Flyer we'd have the coil by now, is all I'm saying," James smiled darkly at him.

"You cold hearted bast..." Tom hissed.

Chakotay quickly interrupted, "we should make it more appealing. Is that what you're suggesting?"

"Well yeah. It shouldn't be too hard to mimic the Delta Flyer's specs as well as the false lifesigns. That should get their attention," James replied.

"Do it. Standby transporters Harry," Chakotay ordered.

Harry seemed disappointed and yet he nodded anyway.

The awayteam of four rematerialised in a quiet corridor of the Borg vessel, with a couple of drones napping in nearby alcoves.

"How are they *dummies* if you're using their idea?" Seven asked.

Kathryn glared at her, momentarily distracted from Morgan's jittery glances around and heaving chest. "They were assimilated anyway. Probably because they decided to have a domestic over leaving the toilet seat up in the middle of a Borg ship."

"Indeed. Let us proceed," Tuvok said. He wandered off one way, Seven followed him.

Kathryn turned to address Morgan, catching her take in a deep breath to calm down. "It's okay, stay close." She lead the way in the opposite direction.

Morgan nearly bumped into another drone as they crossed a junction. A close by door opened revealing a group of Borg putting technology on a small child. One drone moved out of the way so she could see the child's face. Kiara's face. Morgan stumbled up to them but as soon as she got there, they all disappeared.

"Remember who you are," the Borg Queen's voice whispered.

Morgan felt a hand on her shoulder, making her jump and yelp a bit. She turned to see who it was.

"What's wrong?" Kathryn asked whispered.

"Fine. Nothing, I'm fine," Morgan stuttered.

They were already falling behind their strict schedule, Kathryn reluctantly continued onward.

Without Harry panicking at every bit of dust and Kathryn's lack of coffee, the rest of the heist finally went according to plan. Morgan and Kathryn silently watched the coil transport away to safety before they let themselves leave the chamber and return to the rendezvous point.

They were only a few corridors away when the Queen once more whispered her name in Morgan's mind, stopping her cold in her tracks.

Kathryn swung around as soon as she noticed the lack of footstep sounds following her. "Morgan!" she shouted back at her.

"I can't," Morgan stammered, avoiding eye contact with her mother. Her body trembled. "I'm staying."

Kathryn's confused stare evolved into one of her more deadly deathglares. "What, to hell you are!"

Morgan's whole body flinched at the tone of her voice. She didn't have to look to know what face she was using. "I'm sorry, I have to."

Kathryn shook her head as she marched over to her daughter to grab her arm. A Borg forcefield shot up to stop her. Soon the deathglare was nothing but a memory, all that remained was fear and desperateness. Kathryn instinctively raised the rifle in her arm, ready to aim it at anyone or thing that'd help to get rid of the barrier.

Morgan meanwhile finally raised her head to look her straight in the eye. The fear in them mirrored each other.

"Mum, please go!" Morgan begged her. Drones approached her from behind.

"Chakotay to Janeway, the sphere has detected Voyager. We have to get you out of there now," Chakotay's voice said.

Kathryn aimed at the drones, even though she knew the forcefield would stop her. "No, I'm not leaving my daughter here. You're out of your mind if you think I'm gonna leave."

For a fraction of a second the Captain saw a glint in her daughter's eye. An all too familiar one. It was more than stubbornness. She couldn't quite label it. Once it was gone, Morgan only looked at her sadly.

"If you don't, Voyager... Kiara will be assimilated. Please," she said.

More drones approached Kathryn, killing any choice she had left. She aimed her rifle at one of them and fired. More kept coming until they blocked her view of and path to Morgan.

Kathryn had no choice now. She took off down the only remaining corridor, seething like she never had before. Any drone that dared to come within a few metres of her were shot without hesitation. None tried to stop her, every drone she shot were only walking around like she wasn't even there. It didn't matter to her, she didn't even think about it.

Meanwhile Tuvok and Seven almost walked into two waiting drones. They slowly approached on seeing them.

"They see us," Seven stated.

Tuvok agreed, he gestured to go another way. Seven followed while keeping her widened eyes on the Borg.

Despite the setback they arrived at the meet up point unscathed. That was until Kathryn barrelled down the corridor, eyes burning hotter than fire and a rifle almost certainly set to kill, not that she

needed it. They both flinched, thinking they'd be next. Fortunately she stopped next to them and turned away.

Tuvok and Seven looked on curiously, Seven more so once she noticed Morgan wasn't with her.

"Captain, the girl...?" Seven dared to ask.

"What? Do you want to go too?" Kathryn spat back at her.

Seven's eyebrow raised, "no."

"Damn it! Are you sure? No one likes you. Your only friend is a guy who carries around a severed arm as a security blanket. God knows what he does with that," Kathryn grumbled. "Bridge, we're in position. Three to beam up," her voice now so icy it sliced through the air.

"Three?"

"Yes, three! Do it!" Kathryn roared down toward her commbadge.

Even on another ship, Tuvok and Seven felt the entire Bridge wince.

The Bridge:

Kathryn stomped off the turbolift with Seven and Tuvok in tow.

Chakotay didn't even dare look at her, just in case he melted on eye contact. "The sphere's changing course. They're retreating."

"They're powering up their remaining transwarp coils," Jessie warned.

Kathryn growled in the direction of the viewscreen, her hands firmly gripped the railing behind the command chairs. "Follow them."

Tom didn't dare argue with her, he swallowed hard and did what he was told.

Tuvok took over from James, who was the only one brave or more likely stupid enough to look in Kathryn's general direction. "Morgan? Is she..."

Kathryn's grip on the railings tightened. Chakotay meanwhile swung around, now not bothered about the effects of Kathryn's expression or voice. "Morgan is still there?" he snapped.

"I'm not hearing any torpedoes firing. This is what they're for, not for throwing them about for funsies!" Kathryn yelled over her shoulder towards Tuvok.

"Aye Captain," Tuvok stuttered fearfully for once.

Tom noticed the Borg ship glowing green. The moment it shot away he thought about emergency transporting himself into his precious shuttle, but even that wasn't a fast enough get away.

He wasn't the only one. Unknown crewmembers were inching their way out of the Bridge, fearing the worst. Most of the remaining bridge stood completely still, either sweating bullets and or firmly biting their lips with worry.

What they expected to happen didn't. Kathryn instead mumbled, "I'll be in my Ready Room," and walked off silently with her head down.

Chakotay watched after her with great worry. In his mind there was only one way to fix this. He whirled around towards the back of the Bridge. "If it isn't already, get the coil to Engineering. B'Elanna needs to get to work on it immediately."

"Yes Commander," Tuvok said first. He stepped around James, who looked a little distracted, to get to the turbolift. Doing so seemed to bring his attention back.

Seven folded her arms behind her back, "are you suggesting we pursue the sphere? They already have a head start, we do not know their heading and furthermore..."

"Furthermore Seven's head will soon be on a spike in Janeway's Ready Room if she keeps whining about other people daring to be Borg around her," James said sharply, cutting Seven off so much she forgot what she was saying. "I'm sorry, did I crash the *yey a 15 year old's been re-assimilated and so I can get attention again* party you were planning?"

Tom tugged on his collar nervously, even still he sniggered. "Oh boy, you really do bitch slap her around, don't you? I thought that'd be more Jessie's style than yours."

While Tom's very brief and likely airlock involved funeral played out in Jessie's head, James briefly pulled a disgusted face before rolling his eyes and sighing. "Why do I even bother?" he muttered.

The Borg Sphere entered normal space. It flew into a huge Borg structure, thousands of times larger than any of the cubes flying around its vicinity. A docking bay door in one of the central pieces opened and the sphere flew inside.

Two drones escorted Morgan through many corridors. She had kept her attention straight down at her feet in a vain attempt to pretend she was somewhere else. Her escorts lead her to an odd door, unlike any of the others they had passed. Shaped like an eye on its side, it had several layers open differently to each other creating an odd spirally effect.

They had to stop briefly to wait the couple of seconds it took to do so, forcing Morgan to look up to see where they were. She reluctantly walked inside, leaving her escorts behind, to find herself in a three sided screw hole shaped chamber. Straight ahead in the centre of it stood an empty circular alcove. Only a few drones worked nearby, none paid any attention to her.

The Queen's head and shoulders floated down from the ceiling, staring directly at her. Her metallic spine slivered in midair. The sight of it made the girl's skin crawl, she resisted the need to vocalise her disgust. She mouthed a silent eew instead.

From the alcove's floor body parts rose up, assembling before her eyes into a headless torso and legs. The spine slid into the finished version, then the shoulders and head. All while the Queen continued to stare at her like a piece of meat.

Once it was over she cranked her neck side to side before as she walked over to Morgan, extending a hand to her cheek.

"Welcome home," she purred. "My daughter."

Voyager:

"Oh, Captain," Harry said. Kathryn turned around to face him.

"What is it now!" she yelled angrily.

"Well, remember that away mission with the shuttle crash and the *misunderstanding*," Harry said quietly, air quoting the last word with his fingers.

"That narrows it down," Jessie muttered.

"So?" Chakotay said with little interest.

Harry flinched. He was used to Kathryn's, but Chakotay's cold attitude felt insulting. "They're following us," he said in a neutral tone.

"I am in no mood for them," Kathryn spat. Chakotay took a couple of steps backwards as a precaution.

"They're hailing," Harry said.

"Let's get this over with," Kathryn said.

The viewscreen was changed from an image of a strange ship, to a stranger still looking alien with horns on his forehead and shoulders.

"Voyager, give us back our treasure!" he yelled.

"I don't know what you're talking about," Kathryn said surprisingly calmly and even with a hint of a smirk.

The alien glowered, "the coffee, Janeway. Don't think we weren't aware of your reputation. Return it now."

"No, why should I?" Kathryn said huffily like a child who had been told to clean her room.

"Uh because it's ours," the alien said.

"Duuuuuhhhh not anymore," Kathryn groaned before flipping him off and turning her back on the screen. "I'm sick of your ugly face, now go away."

"Er, Captain. Maybe we should give back what's theirs," Tom suggested nervously.

Kathryn dropped into her chair and slouched over the left side with little care. "Maybe you should stop thinking anyone gives any crap about what you say Paris. All that comes out is a waste of oxygen."

The alien snarled at her, "Janeway, this isn't over."

"I thought I was pretty clear on the ugly face, go away comment Harry," Kathryn said casually but with a dangerous side eye directed toward Opps. Harry swallowed hard and promptly turned the viewscreen off.

"They're powering weapons," James reported from Tactical.

"Torpedoes," Kathryn said.

James frowned at the readouts he was getting for trying. "We don't have any left."

Hearing that flicked another anger switch in Kathryn's head. "What did I tell that logical prat about the fucking torpedoes? Just lobbing them around like they're flipping snowballs or some crap. For god's sake, just use Seven. She wants to be useful after all."

James shrugged, looking indifferent. "Sure." No one else objected either. He worked for a few seconds. "Transport complete."

Kathryn smiled smugly, "now that we have something bigger in our torpedo tubes, it's time to shoot out the garbage. Fire."

"Direct hit," James said a few seconds later.

Kathryn looked up at the viewscreen to see a Seven shaped dent in the alien ship. She wasn't surprised to see the most damage was around the chest area. The sight of her flailing about made her laugh hard.

Nobody though knew why she was laughing. All they could see on the viewscreen was the alien ship occasionally firing energy weapons toward them. Chakotay watched her with great worry. Everyone

but James were averting their wide eyes away from her. He hovered over the weapons controls with a raised eyebrow. "So erm, about their powering weapons," he said over the top of the ship shaking.

Chakotay sighed into his hand. Kathryn still laughed while wiping a few tears from her eyes. "Phasers, target their weapons array," Chakotay ordered.

James nodded and did what he was told. The shaking stopped after a couple more.

"They're hailing again," Harry said.

"On screen," Chakotay said. The viewscreen activated again.

"You may have beaten us this time but we'll be back," the alien grumbled.

"No you won't. We don't do continuity around here," Tom said.

Harry sighed, "if only that were true."

"Drat, we'll be back in Season Two," the alien said. The viewscreen was turned off.

"Finally," Kathryn sighed. She pushed up out of her chair to make her way around to the turbolift. Something dark reddish purple with a touch of gold caught her right eye, forcing her to get a proper look. To her annoyance it was Seven standing at her usual spot. "What? She's still here?" She swung around to glare towards James who looked confused at her back. "You lied to me. Got my hopes up for nothing. You're grounded."

James waited till she was in the turbolift and the doors were closed before allowing himself to laugh nervously. "I was joking about the head on the spike."

Chakotay shook his head.

Morgan swiped the cold, clammy hand from her cheek. "Gross. Don't touch me. I'm not your daughter."

The Borg Queen stared at her coldly like she was inspecting her. "But you are. All of my drones are my brothers and sisters, my children," she said in an airy and chilly voice. She circled the girl all while keeping her eye on her. "We are family."

"I have a family," Morgan spat back in disgust. "You're not it. They are why I'm here. You'd better leave them alone."

The Queen's grey eyes sparkled as they remained locked on her. "Of course," she said flippantly. "They are long gone, far away even with the aid of their new toy."

"Ok fine," Morgan said sharply, while inside she panicked. The realisation of her predicament kicked in finally. "Why did you want me here so badly? Don't you have billions of slaves already?"

"We can talk about this tomorrow my dear. You must be tired. I've made a bed up for you," the Queen said, gesturing to an empty alcove.

Morgan grimaced, her eyes widened and moved side to side. "A bed? Are you off your popper?"

The Borg Queen frowned toward her. "What is that, some kind of slang for medicine?"

"Yeah sure," Morgan said, rolling her eyes. "I'm not taking a nap with you around."

"You speak like a true individual. Such insolence and peculiarity," the Borg Queen said. "You are unique."

Morgan instinctively took a step backwards after a quick glance over her shoulder. "I told you, you should've grabbed Seven if you have a problem with that."

The Queen smiled at her. "On the contrary. Your individuality, your uniqueness will add to our perfection."

"That's why you kidnapped me?" Morgan said.

"That is why we put you there in the first place. You believe that the temporal anomaly incident was an accident. Did you really think we'd not look for you?" the Queen said.

Morgan's eyes flew wide open, her jaw threatened to do the same. "What the hell does that mean? The anomaly? Did you do something to it, to lure us there?"

"No, you are correct that it was created but not by us. We took advantage of it. The Torg thought they could harness its power. We preyed on their greed," the Queen replied.

"Why?" Morgan asked.

The Queen turned toward the empty alcove. "It has been a long couple of sleepless nights for you..."

"Yeah and whose fault is that?" Morgan grumbled.

"You cannot stay awake forever. You can either wait for your Human weakness to overcome you at any time, or you can control it and regenerate as we do," the Queen said.

"No," Morgan muttered.

"It will help order your thoughts. Once your cycle is complete we will continue our conversation," the Queen said. Morgan stared at the alcove nervously. "Comply," was said gently with a hint of authority.

Morgan tried to swallow the lump in her throat, but all it did was make it throb all the more.

Cargo Bay Two:

Many crewmembers had been tasked with moving the remaining Borg debris that was of little use. Tom grumbled under his breath as he was the only one having to clean the powdered metal and fire damage soot from the floor, with only an old fashioned pan and little brush.

Chakotay watched him, hoping it would distract him at least. Even when somebody treaded into one of the piles of dust Tom had collected, thus kicking it everywhere including his face, he couldn't manage a smile.

Tuvok stood in front of the first officer with his back to all this. "Lieutenant Torres wants to run every test she and her team can think of before we integrate it into our systems. I agree with this assessment, however in the circumstances..."

"We're no good to her in a million pieces. It's fine," Chakotay mumbled.

Tuvok nodded. "In addition, sensors detect no Borg activity within our sensor range or subspace telemetry."

"They'll probably be halfway across the quadrant by now," Chakotay said.

"They wanted only her. There's got to be a reason for it," Kathryn muttered from nearby. The two men turned their heads in her direction. She folded her arms across the station opposite the alcoves, staring at them coldly, Chakotay was surprised they weren't ice blocks by now. "Is this why they continuously bothered us? Why?"

Chakotay and Tuvok were not sure if she was even talking to them. Merely talking aloud towards herself. Chakotay thought to approach her slowly and carefully. "Kathryn," he said softly.

Neelix approached, even he knew better than to trouble the Captain now and targeted Tuvok instead. "Commander. We've cleared out most of the debris, but before we vaporise it I'd like to melt down the larger fragments. All sorts of goodies in there."

"Oh god, you're not going to cook it are you?" Kathryn hissed without even looking at him.

Neelix flinched briefly and carried on as if nothing happened. "Um the metal contains compounds that could be useful to us."

Tuvok nodded, "very well, proceed."

"Um, right erm..." Neelix started to stammer and shift uncomfortably. Tuvok looked at him, puzzled. "About the wall of alcoves. They require a lot of power, thirty megawatts each. Maybe we could..."

"Hook you to one of them, what a fine idea," Kathryn snapped, this time she did look at him. Neelix melted into a puddle. It took him a while to collect himself so he could run away.

Kathryn sighed and yet her eyes sharpened in the general direction the two remaining men were in. Both of them looked on in concern, but not only for her sake. They knew how far she would go in a usual situation. This was personal though, and Chakotay could not shake off the image of the Borg cowering beneath her heel.

The Ready Room:

Kathryn tapped away at her computer determinedly, barking commands now and then. Her eyes darted rapidly, scanning the screen for anything useful. Her cup of coffee sitting next to her had long since gone cold.

"Computer run an analysis on all subspace fluctuations," was the last order before the door chimed. "What?"

Tuvok edged in carefully, he knew to stay at the door. "A member of the crew has requested an appointment with the Captain. I told her that you were occupied but she was insistent."

Fortunately for him Kathryn kept her growing intense gaze fixed on the computer for now. "Right, it's not like you're the Security Chief who should logically be a firm hand. You know what, tell them to stick their appointment up their a..." Kathryn's voice rose, and so did her chin. Before Tuvok was hit by the deathglare of the year, she spotted a small figure peeking out from behind his legs. Her rage blew away quickly.

"Request granted, send her in," she said eventually.

Tuvok glanced down at the child to make sure she was still okay with seeing her. The little blonde girl gave him a nod. He scurried out.

Naomi walked up to Kathryn's desk holding a PADD, with her eyes still wide from the rant she overheard.

"Erm permission to submit a proposal for your review," she said.

"Proposal?" Kathryn questioned.

"It's a rescue operation for Morgan," Naomi replied. She handed the PADD over to Kathryn.

She had a quick look at it while murmuring, "I hope this has a lot of Borg shooting in it." Naomi wisely chose to not answer that. She waited patiently. Kathryn finished reading the first paragraph and looked up with a smile. "You wrote this yourself?"

"Yes ma'am. You see if we change the long range sensors to her cortical implant frequency, maybe we could find her," Naomi replied enthusiastically.

"The Delta Quadrant's massive, and she could be thousands of light years from here," Kathryn said tiredly, but not without a small smile. "At least you've tried and it's better than the lure them back here with Seven plan."

Naomi pulled a face, "that's silly, was it Tom?"

Kathryn's eyes shifted from side to side, she cleared her throat and tried to look like a picture of authority instead of shifty. It wasn't going to fool anybody. "Yes."

"What if we boosted our deflector range with power from the main deflector," Naomi suggested with her eyes lighting up.

"That's not the pr..." Kathryn said sharply, but cut herself off to avoid upsetting her. She smiled sweetly at the little girl. "It's not that simple, but I appreciate the initiative. Great job Crewman."

Naomi's brightened eyes began to wobble. Kathryn worried she did still manage to upset her. Then the bottom lip was pushed out and she looked like her mother had told her no desserts today. "You won't give up, will you? I don't want Kiara to be sad."

Kathryn flinched at the thought. She hadn't told her yet. Too soon, she thought. Then she wondered how Naomi found out, and if she did then it was possible Kiara already knew. "Did someone tell her, I'll ring their..."

"No. I asked for her, Seven told me. Told her didn't know," Naomi answered.

Kathryn's eyes narrowed, "neck ringing's still on." Naomi increased her puppy dog stare by ten, it was super effective against her rising temper. She walked around her desk to crouch down beside the girl so her head was level with the girl's. "There are a few things you need to learn about being a starship captain. Get one of those shirts that don't need tugging everytime you stand up. Don't suffer fools, they're slappable."

She leaned in closer to whisper the last part in the girl's ear. "And never abandon a member of your crew." Once she pulled back the girl grinned, which made her smile as well. "Unless they're a blonde bimbo with I'm perfect mummy issues in a stupid skin tight catsuit," she said flippantly.

"Huh?" Naomi said, blinking curiously.

The computer on the desk rescued them both. Kathryn hurried over to it and swivelled it around so they both could see it. The data on the screen gave her a sense of relief for a moment, then the anger began to bubble beneath the surface. Tempering it for now she glanced at the child standing next to her. "Take a look. What does this look like?"

"Sensor logs," Naomi answered.

"Yes, but these," Kathryn said, wagging her finger at a certain part, "aren't random fluctuations. They're Borg comm signals. These were directed at my quarters yesterday."

Naomi stifled a gasp for now, "does that mean they talked to Morgan?"

Kathryn studied the screen intently. Her head lightly shook absentmindedly. "It certainly looks like they tried."

Morgan awoke and the first thing she saw was a drone in her face, his arm raised near her ear working on something. Her instinct was to immediately shove him away. Once she did she saw the Queen watching her directly ahead with a small smile.

"Good morning," the Queen said as the drone shuffled off to do something else.

Morgan hurriedly stepped down from the alcove whilst checking her neck and face for any new implants. To her horror she felt one on her neck, round and small.

"I wouldn't, if I were you," the Queen said on approach. "It's a neural processing adjunct. Designed to increase synaptic efficiency. One slight tug and you will be dead within a second."

Her fingers remained, circling around the new implant. It made her shiver. "What happened to wanting me for my uniqueness? I don't want it."

"You prefer to remain small?" the Queen asked.

"I'd prefer to be nothing like you," Morgan stuttered in panic and anger.

The Queen stepped closer, not breaking eye contact. Her voice lowered to a whisper. "Don't be afraid. We won't turn you into a drone. You're much too valuable the way you are, but you've left humanity behind, try to see past their petty emotions as well. Fear, anger, vanity, they've corrupted you," the Queen said. Her hand raised to caress her cheek once more.

Morgan cringed and pulled back to avoid it. "Cut it out!" she snapped. "You're not making any sense. I was never Borg, I've always been me. You want an individual but without the emotions? Why bother with me at all? Even Seven has that vanity crap you're talking about."

"Isn't it obvious? You're going to help us assimilate humanity," the Queen smirked.

Morgan froze for a moment, then looked at her angrily. The Queen ignored it.

"We failed in our last attempt to assimilate Earth, lousy Enterprise E," the Queen muttered.

"Uh huh?" Morgan said with a bemused expression. Before she could say anymore the Queen continued muttering angrily to herself. Morgan rolled her eyes. Doing so she noticed some of the drones nearby glancing over with worry, only to go back to work when they noticed the girl looking at them. Morgan was certain she saw one of them quickly hide a rolled up piece of large paper in between a crevice in between consoles.

"Anyway, as I was saying," the Queen huffed. "We failed in our last attempt to assimilate Earth and we won't succeed the next time unless we understand the nature of their resistance."

"Wasn't it an android that ruined your plans?" Morgan asked.

The Queen ignored her again. "You must be our eyes, let us see humanity."

"Would you let me go if I told you that Humans think assimilation sucks?" Morgan asked.

"No of course not. That's far too simple, the second part would be rather short then," the Queen replied.

"The second what?" Morgan mumbled. "It's the reason they resist. Isn't that what you asked for? I imagine we're not the only ones."

"You misunderstand. We require far more knowledge than that," the Queen said.

"If it's knowledge you want, why didn't you assimilate me? It's a lot quicker," Morgan snapped. "Oh and while we're on the subject, how did you manage to recover from melting?"

"You grew up on a Borg vessel as an individual. You have a unique perspective. We do not want another drone. We want you," the Queen answered.

Morgan shook her head stubbornly. "No, you never bothered Tani. If you wanted some Human perspective ninny who'd do as you told her, Seven would've been better. You wanted me, so far you've given me no good reason why."

"Shut up, you're here now and you will help us," the Queen hissed.

"Why should I?" Morgan said defiantly, arming her very own Janeway skunk eye.

The Queen wasn't fazed one bit. To her annoyance the smirk reappeared. "How many cubes should I send to pay Voyager a visit?" Morgan flinched, her face drained quickly. "One, ten? A hundred? It's your choice."

"Zero," Morgan mumbled as she looked down at the floor. She did not want to see the resulting smug face on her kidnapper. The ship shook slightly. "What's happening?" she asked.

"Our vessel is heading for sector 034," the Queen replied.

"Why?" Morgan asked.

"Does assimilation come to mind?" the Queen asked. Morgan gave the Queen another angry look. "Do not concern yourself yet, it is not Earth. Our presence is not required but I thought the experience would be a rewarding one for you." A small monitor appeared out of nowhere. It showed a large planet.

"How many people are there?" Morgan asked.

"Three hundred and ninety two thousand," the Queen said with a flourish. Morgan couldn't break away her gaze from the planet's image, no matter how much it made her tremble. "You're experiencing anger, a human impulse. You've forgotten what it means to be Borg. We will add their distinctiveness to our own."

Kathryn's Quarters:

"I've never seen anything like it," the Doctor said in dismay.

Kathryn nodded, feeling some sympathy for the hologram. She had similar difficulty too. "Yes, but I have confidence that you'll be able to figure it out."

The Doctor's brow furrowed. "What? You don't know?" Kathryn stared at him similarly.

Chakotay shook it off and took the opportunity to continue his own report. "The Hansens' logs mentioned a Borg hierarchy, comparing the Collective to a bee hive..."

"Papa found the tactical drone!" Seven's voice chimed in from outside. The Doctor shook his head in quiet judgment.

Kathryn sniggered, "papa."

"Erm, yeah it turned out his hunch was right," Chakotay said. "The tactical drone had received direct commands from this Borg Queen. I thought to analyse the comm signals."

"I suggested that!" Seven's voice complained.

Kathryn rolled her eyes while the Doctor continued to shake his head.

Chakotay tapped at the computer on the desk beside them. Once done he swivelled it around to show the Captain. "Look at the transpectral frequencies."

"They match the ones that were sent to Morgan," Kathryn said.

"Not exactly. The variances you observed in the higher spikes, they're another signal hidden amongst the noise," the Doctor said.

Kathryn looked on, impressed. "You figured it out already?"

The Doctor frowned once more. He shook his head rapidly, "no, I recognised it the nanosecond I clasped my eyes on it."

"Then why claim you'd never seen it before!" Kathryn snarled at him.

Seven's voice once more dared to chime in, "they're not commands anyway. They're a hive mind! You said it wrong."

The Doctor pointed at the door with a knowing look. "That's what I meant."

"Oh I know," Kathryn groaned tiredly. "Have you got any Valium on you? She's one whine away from humping my leg."

Chakotay bit his lip to try not to laugh. The Doctor's jaw meanwhile dropped. Kathryn didn't register either of them and kept a straight face.

"What kind of signal are we talking about Doctor?" Chakotay asked to hopefully change the subject back.

"To put it in laymen's terms, it's to stimulate pathways in the brain linked to memories while the subject is sleeping. It's most effective whilst in REM sleep as it makes them more..." the Doctor replied.

"Vivid?" Kathryn questioned.

"Susceptible to manipulation. Harder to detect too, unless you're me," the Doctor said proudly.

"The Queen can talk to any drone with an interplexing beacon," Seven's voice rang through again.

Chakotay glanced at the door then to the Doctor with a frown of concern on his face. "Does Morgan still have hers?"

The Doctor worried about what Kathryn would do to him if he answered. Still, he had to. "Since she was from a disconnected Borg Sphere, from a future now non-existent timeline, removing it seemed low priority compared to the implants that were painful or damaging to her."

Kathryn didn't delete him on the spot like he thought she would. Instead she wandered to the window to stare out into the stars. "What do we know about this Borg Queen?" she asked. The Doctor thought now was the time to escape before anything happened.

"I don't know. The Hansens never got the chance to find out," Chakotay replied quietly for Seven's benefit. If she was still outside.

"Well, it's as I thought. Morgan was contacted by her, she threatened her to get her to leave," Kathryn said plainly. "As soon as she started having nightmares, I should've done something. I knew something was wrong. I didn't follow my gut. I let my daughter go."

Chakotay passed her a look of sympathy, even if she couldn't see it. "The threat was probably *if you don't, we'll assimilate Voyager*. That would include her. It's not your fault."

"What's running through that Collective mind of yours? You've got thousands of species to choose from. Billions of individuals. Why her?" Kathryn ranted, her voice sharpened on the final sentence. "You could've assimilated us all. Why violate her dreams? Why threaten her like this? Is it a game, a sick game?"

Chakotay dared to take a few steps forward, hoping he could calm her down. Before he could she swung around, a newfound determination had burned into her eyes.

"I want you to keep studying the Hansens' logs. Compile a list of every single gadget they used to spy on the Borg. Assemble anyone other than Seven to assist you," Kathryn said. His eyebrow raised. "Oh fine, use Seven if you need her. It's petty not to."

"Oh really?" Chakotay teased her. Kathryn narrowed her eyes slightly. "Look, if you're planning on using their methods to find and rescue our daughter, you should remember one thing."

"What?" Kathryn wondered.

"As brilliant as the Hansens were, they made one mistake," Chakotay said. Kathryn opened her mouth to reply. "And I don't mean having a daughter."

Kathryn huffed once. "Oh Chakotay, as if I'd say that." An awkward silence followed as Chakotay tried to resist commenting on that, and Kathryn knew as much. "Fine, what was it?"

"They became overconfident. You know where it got them," Chakotay answered.

"Don't worry. I'm not going to bring Kiara along and start beaming Borg drones in front of her, giving them stupid nicknames like Junior or Needleface," Kathryn muttered.

Chakotay couldn't manage it this time, he laughed. "You couldn't just say *we won't make the same mistake?*"

"I did," Kathryn said in a confused voice.

"This will be a long range tactical mission. It may take days, even weeks to find our missing crewman. So if anyone has a gag or some tape, I'll be forever grateful," Kathryn said whilst pacing.

Tom looked on in shock. "That's no way to handle a sarcastic know it all, and I'm not going near him to apply it." Someone tossed Kathryn a roll of very wide black tape. She smiled at the helmsman darkly, that's when he realised who she really met. He gulped the air, giving him the hiccups.

"Lieutenant Torres is equipping the Delta Flyer with the transwarp coil we borrowed. We'll be able to use the Flyer to track down the Sphere that abducted Morgan," Kathryn continued.

"Uh, how?" Harry asked.

Kathryn's hands shot to her hips. Everyone braced themselves. "Isn't it obvious?"

Tom couldn't resist, he had to answer this one even with his hiccup attack ongoing, "yeah Harry. The sphere will obviously be fly-eh-ing in a straight line, making it dead easy to follow-eh them. We'll even catch them up be-eh-cause they stopped for gas and sandwi-eregh-ches. We'll blast them with the rereh power of friendship, rescue the damsel in the dis-reh-tess in the nick of time. Scedaddle and still have plenty of trans-er-erp time to get ten years closer to Earth."

Harry tried to keep a straight face, it brought tears to his eyes. "Oh of course. It's so simple."

"If that's not sarcastic and know it all, I've been doing my whole life wrong," James sniggered.

Kathryn's eyebrows both raised briefly, then her eyes rolled to one side. "Mmmhmm," she managed to say behind tightly sealed lips. She breathed in a bit before continuing, her voice slightly sharper than before. "Using the Hansens research we have equipped the Flyer with some special shielding that will hide it from the Borg. We'll need to modify the bio dampeners that Seven suggested since they were soooo useful before."

Seven held herself back for the time being.

"Giggles will pilot the shuttle. Doctor, you'll come along to help Morgan if she needs medical treatment. We'll need someone at Tactical who knows Borg weaponry and would be able to handle a Borg encryption code or two," Kathryn said, actually looking toward Seven for once. She raised her hopes. Kathryn swung around at the last second. "James, this sounds like the perfect job for you."

"What?" Seven snapped.

James smiled in Kathryn's direction, "you already asked me to go an hour ago."

Kathryn smiled deviously back, a mischievous glint in her eye matched it. "And now it's public."

Seven's eyes looked ready to fall out at any second. The Doctor had been standing beside her the whole time, he quickly side stepped a couple of times to get away.

"Anyway I'll be leading the away team. The rest..." Kathryn continued as if nothing happened. Jessie put her hand up. "Yes, what is it, hurry, I don't want to forget my speech."

"Can I come?" Jessie asked.

"She only wants to come because he's-her going," Tom said as he pointed at James.

Jessie pulled the Borg arm out from behind her back and raised it up to threaten him with, the Doctor gasped in horror.

"I'll be quiet," Tom squeaked.

"I've been looking all over for that!" the Doctor whined at the same time.

"I know. Anyway, I thought you'd need all the Borg help you can get," Jessie said. Seven's cheeks flexed, eyes managed to bug out even more. She tried to shake it off and scoff.

"Yes, that would be most helpful, thank you," Kathryn replied sincerely.

Seven's jaw almost fell out. "What?"

"Ooh, maybe you should have volunteered first Barbs," Jessie teased.

"Yes, now the seats are all taken. Too bad. I'll continue my speech," Kathryn said. Everyone silently groaned. "We will need tactical support when we return, that's why I'll need Commander Tuvok at his post. Until I return you will be taking orders from Commander Chakotay. Let's get started."

The Delta Flyer:

Tom lowered himself into the helm seat slowly, savouring the moment for as long as possible. He let out a relaxed sigh once he was done. "Feels like I've been waiting for this moment my whole life."

At the station behind him to his left, Jessie watched with a look of disgust. She then looked to James on the opposite side of the shuttle. "I thought we were gagging him. That's the only reason I volunteered."

Tom rolled his eyes and grunted. "Hey, I'm not super keen on seeing you two making out on my shuttle's consoles again either."

Jessie looked ready to explode at any second, she was even trembling. James looked on with worry. Neither of them had to wait long. "It was a hug!" Tom smacked his lips together to prove a point. "Fine, a cheek kiss. Just friends do it. We were alone, you walked in. Only thirteen year old twats laugh at that."

Tom sniggered obnoxiously as Kathryn entered the cockpit with the Doctor behind her, James glanced over his shoulder. "Where's the black tape?" Jessie snapped.

Kathryn sighed hesitantly, "oh, I knew I forgot something." She turned around to go back. The Doctor was still in the way of the door with little room to move out of it.

"Please. If I hadn't come in, that just friends quick cheek kiss hug would've turned into a full on sno..." Tom chuckled.

"What were you saying before Tom? That you're so happy Morgan was kidnapped, as you can now finally take the Flyer for a transwarp spin," James interrupted.

Tom turned very, very white in a matter of seconds. Kathryn's eyes widened as much as Seven's normally would. The entire shuttle was quiet. Eerily quiet.

"Well played," Tom squeaked.

James smiled, then looked back at Jessie mouthing the words *I know* to her. She sniggered quietly.

Kathryn meanwhile walked up to stand in between them. A phaser was quickly dumped onto James' console. "Be my guest."

"To gag him or...?" James asked.

Kathryn shrugged, "use your better judgement. I trust it's the right one."

Tom swallowed a lump in his throat. He quickly started the Flyer up in a blind panic, "coil is online. Transwarp powering up, which only I know how to do might I add."

"Pull lever to go?" James said.

Tom narrowed his eyes and muttered, "imbecile, as if." He leaned forward to block the view of him pulling one of the levers.

The Delta Flyer lurched forward harshly, it shuddered for a few minutes. "Compensating for idiot boy racer turbulence," Jessie muttered while tapping on her console quickly. The shuddering was reduced.

"We're at critical velocity. Flux capacitor is charged and ready," Tom reported. He looked smug about it, "bet you didn't know that part."

James and Kathryn rolled their eyes in disgust. The Doctor shook his head and sat down near the back.

"Yes, you're a very clever boy with B'Elanna's cheat sheet there," Kathryn said in a patronising tone. "Now go."

The shuttle suffered further tremors as the view outside eventually changed into a bright green tunnel. The sight of it, coupled with the shaky launch left Jessie a little light headed, the heat drained from her skin. Kathryn noticed her absent minded hand press on her stomach, and was about to comment when she heard the Doctor groan behind her.

"Tom really, you couldn't have had a toilet break before we left?" Kathryn snapped harshly. Tom had his back to everyone so was naturally confused. "Even the hologram's affected by it."

"What, what's my fault now?" Tom snapped.

James shook his head, equally confused as him. "I'm not following either..." he then noticed Jessie as well. "Jess?"

"I'm fine. Motion sickness, I'll get used to it," Jessie mumbled.

The Doctor overheard, so he tried to get up. His matrix objected similarly to her. "It seems my matrix isn't accustomed to extreme velocities. I will need to adjust."

"I'll take a look if you want. Sooner the better," James said. He didn't wait for an answer, he got up anyway and hurried to the back. Kathryn took his seat.

"Oh I dunno, if I have to be sick I'm in the best seat in the house," Jessie said.

Horror shot onto Tom's face when he remembered which station she sat at, "don't even think about it."

"There's the Sphere's trail," Kathryn smiled. "You should be getting the co-ordinates now."

"That was fast," Tom said. His hand reached for a different lever. The shuttle swerved violently. James had been looking at the Doctor's mobile emitter during it, he stumbled a bit into the wall, grabbing something a little too late. The Doctor felt his matrix flip upside down, while Jessie hoped her stomach wasn't doing that. Tom quickly ducked down just in case.

"You know, it's almost like you're trying to get everyone to hate you," Jessie mumbled through her nausea.

"This is quite fun," Tom said with glee.

James recovered, he had a sheepish look on his face as he tossed something in his hand to the floor. "Oops."

The Doctor's head snapped toward him in a panic, "oops?"

"Full speed ahead," Kathryn said, ignoring everyone's comments.

"Not you Doc," James replied. Two more taps to his emitter and he was done. "Try that."

The Doctor attempted to stand. Satisfied his matrix wasn't going to fall to pieces, he walked over to tend to Jessie.

Kathryn sighed, for a moment there was peace in the Flyer. That was until Tom frowned and glanced over his shoulder. "Wait, what was that oops about then?" The Captain growled.

Three Borg ships, two cubes and a small diamond shape, entered orbit around a planet. An armada of alien vessels hurried toward them to stop them.

Vasts amount of information lined the screen in front of Morgan; images, text, diagrams. She wasn't paying any attention to them, only looking in the general direction in a daze.

"We've arrived, are you ready?" the Queen asked on approach.

Morgan felt her arms trembling at the thought of what was coming. She tried to hide it by rolling her eyes and tightening her fists. "What do you want, a clap?"

"Tactical weakness?" the Queen asked. Morgan turned around to see her expression when she shrugged with little care. To her disappointment there was not even a flicker in the Queen's eyes. "Tactical strength?"

"Oh!" Morgan said with faked enthusiasm, her eyes wider than usual. "I know this one. They have a weapon that can actually damage you. Too bad," she said with sarcastic pity.

"How do you suppose we adapt?" the Queen asked.

Morgan pretended to think it over, the Queen's eyes drilled into her. "I dunno, self destruct?"

"Thirty nine vessels are approaching our position. They're firing weapons," the Queen said. The ship trembled. She stepped closer to the girl, eyes locked on. "We will be destroyed, you included," the Queen said. The ship shook again, a station nearby exploded.

"Yeah and?" Morgan said with a tired sigh.

The Queen still wasn't fazed, she even smiled a little. "Triaxillating our shield geometry will absorb their phaser pulses." She tilted her head slightly for a couple of seconds. "Adaptation complete. They're no longer a threat."

Morgan froze, dread began to sink in. The helplessness made her feel sick.

"See, resistance gives you nothing but pain," the Queen said. "Go to the primary assimilation chamber. You'll monitor the bio-extraction process."

"What?" Morgan stammered, eyes widening so much they stung. This time she couldn't hide her tremors. "No! Go duck yourself."

"Cute," the Queen smirked briefly. "You're correct though, I'm pushing you too quickly. You can assist with the repairs to our shield matrix instead."

Morgan's shoulders fell, no longer able to hold the tension in any longer. Her fists remained clenched for now. She didn't want to do the repairs either, but at the very least she could get out of the Queen's sight for now. That thought reminded her; as long as she was around Borg she'd never escape that.

"Whatever," she tried to say with some attitude. It came out as a mumble. The best she could do now was leave behind one of her mother's deadliest glares as she walked out of the chamber.

"Morgan," the Queen said softly. The sound of it brought the teen's shoulders back up high, she hesitantly looked over her shoulder to find the Borg already turned around and staring. "Be efficient."

Morgan gave her one more glare and she stomped out of the chamber. The Queen smiled in response.

Many corridors away Morgan fiddled with one of the terminals. Anguished screams of pain echoed everywhere, each one made her breathe in much more deeply and quickly.

A drone walked up to her and it tried to do some work there. She groaned and was only just moving away when the console exploded. Instead of point blank in the face, she fell sideways to the deck.

As she tried to pull herself up two drones approached her and pulled her harshly to her feet. Her whole body flinched. Memories of needles coming for her neck flashed back into her mind. In those few seconds between being grabbed and elbowing one of them then making a run for it, they healed the burn mark on her face and walked off unscathed. She barely had time to move.

Morgan hurried away from the scene, eager to escape the sounds. All she could see though was drones escorting lines of people in the direction she was going. Turning on her heel she fled in another direction. Every drone could potentially grab her and take her back to the Queen, or worse, so she told herself to walk normally.

She turned a corner, what she saw there stopped her dead. Starfleet crewmembers mixed in with some of the aliens. Amongst them she saw a boy who looked like Craig. He managed to push a drone out of the way and run in her direction. He definitely was him, what she didn't get was how. Did the Queen assimilate Voyager anyway despite what she did?

Craig almost ran into her, his eyes widened in further panic on recognising her too. "Morgan, we've got to get out of here."

"How did you get here? Why?" Morgan stuttered. Drones caught up to them. "Watch out!" she screamed.

Craig clutched her arm and ran around her, pulling her with him. No matter where they went, drones seemed to activate and head for them. The pair stumbled backward as their last possible route was the assimilation line. Morgan felt her arm pull back, she swung around in time to see tubules pierce Craig's neck.

"No!" Morgan cried. She felt the assimilation tubules going through her own. Everything went blank.

She woke up to the sound of an explosion. A quick scan around she found she was lying on the deck, near the console that exploded. She felt her neck, there was no new implants or anything else Borg like. She tried to move but the pain in her face stopped her from moving too fast.

Two drones walked up to her like before and pulled her to her feet. One healed the burns on her face. As soon as they moved away she ran back the way she had come.

She finally reached a small room. She stopped at the door way. One drone was busy attaching a mechanical arm to an alien. There was another drone standing guard. There were three other aliens standing near by, looking like they'd given up all hope, staring blankly into space. Resigned to their fate.

A console outside exploded. The second Borg drone walked out to repair it. Morgan quickly turned to the side so he'd have room to walk by her.

The sight of the man on the table, his severed arm, the operation. At first all she could feel was revulsion. It quickly turned to anger. The image of Craig, the Starfleet officers. The Queen was still toying with her, probably because she was being difficult. It was all she had.

That realisation flipped a switch in her mind. It was all she needed. She lunged for the lone drone with all her might.

When she had walked out of the Queen's chamber, she was disgusted, terrified. The tables had turned. She walked back inside with newfound confidence.

"Congratulations," the Queen said with her back still on her, as if she could sense it.

"What for?" Morgan asked.

"Assimilation is complete," the Queen replied.

Morgan walked halfway and stopped, her arms tightly folded. "I suppose you'll want me to go out for the banners and balloons."

"I see you're still drowning in ignorance. This is a wonderful moment for them and us. They've been reborn with a greater purpose," the Queen sneered, she turned to face her. "We've delivered them from order into chaos."

"Yes, hearing billions of voices in your head, twenty four seven, that sounds very orderly. Had any suicides lately?" Morgan said angrily.

"You cling to sarcasm because you are afraid to see the truth. Those people are already adding to our perfection. You can feel their distinctiveness coursing through us, enhancing us. Stop resisting, take pleasure in this," the Queen said as closed in.

"I won't, I'm not as disgusting as you are!" Morgan snapped.

"There is that anger again, you are using it to hide your real feelings of guilt, compassion and sympathy. They're all irrelevant," the Queen said.

"No they're not, they're only irrelevant to boring, ruthless and disgusting people like you," Morgan said.

The Borg Queen seemed distracted for a second. "We've overlooked something, a ship. Ten lifeforms." Morgan's confidence took a hit, she tried not to let it show. A holographic screen appeared in front of the Queen. It showed an alien ship flying away from the carnage. "How do you suggest we proceed? Destroy the vessel or assimilate it?"

"Or let it go. You've got thousands of new slaves already, you've learned everything they know. What's the point?" Morgan said as calmly as possible.

"As usual our thoughts are not one. If those people escape then this species will survive and continue to resist us. But that was what you're hoping for wasn't it?" the Queen asked.

"Resist you? One ship, a few people. You're pathetic," Morgan grumbled.

The Queen's dark smile returned, unnerving her. "Did you have fun? Those drones you incapacitated to save ten *poor wretched souls*? It made you feel superior, didn't it? You judge yet you are no different."

"What?" Morgan said quietly, once more shaking as before.

"You forget; we are one, so I see everything. I know you masked those lifesigns, transported them to that ship. I detected them," the Queen whispered.

On the screen a Borg Cube flew up to the ship and a tractor beam was placed on it.

"What the hell are you doing?" Morgan snapped.

"I'm sorry that this has to be so painful for you but you are a difficult pupil. Abandon your human frailties, they are the cause of your pain," the Queen said, her voice breaking.

"Just let them go!" Morgan yelled desperately.

The Queen stared at her for a couple of seconds. On the screen, the tractor beam was released.

Morgan looked on shocked. The Queen smiled at her and she walked away.

The Delta Flyer dropped out of transwarp and entered the massive Borg complex. In comparison the shuttle was a speck of dust. It didn't ease the tension on board.

"Holy crap," Jessie whispered. Tom nodded in silent agreement.

"Report," Kathryn said as she leaned over the back of James' chair.

"There's thousands of Borg structures and ships, give or take," James answered.

"There's a cube heading our way off the port bow," Tom panicked. He didn't have to say it, they could all see it through the front window, taking up the entire thing. The massive Borg Cube flew above them, the shuttle briefly shuddered.

"Did they see us?" Kathryn wondered.

James triple checked to make sure, "no, their course didn't change, no other ships are coming."

"Any sign of our sphere?" Kathryn asked.

"Yes ma'am. Its ion trail leads directly into whatever it is," Tom said.

"Plot a course, minimum thrusters. Begin scanning for Morgan," Kathryn ordered. James nodded and kept his head down. She meanwhile turned to address the Doctor at the back, working on something. "How's it coming?"

He waited a bit before answering, "I believe I've isolated the translink frequency for Morgan's interplexing beacon. All we need now is a message."

"I have a task for you," the Queen coldly said while walking toward the dead centre of the chamber. "We are planning a new form of assimilation for highly resistant species. I want you to program the nanoprobes."

Morgan huffed through her nose, turning her head away from her. "Yeah, I'll get right on it."

"Your knowledge for the target species is invaluable," the Queen said.

A holographic human man appeared wearing only his knickers, Morgan saw it in the corner of her eye and whispered, "eww pervert."

"Species 5618; Human. Warp capable, physiology inefficient, below average cranial capacity, limited regenerative abilities," the Queen said, circling the near naked hologram. "Creative, obnoxiously sneaky, suffer from delusions of grandeur, lying manipulative scum snorting coffee in between breaths," her voice rebounded to bitter ranting by the time she was done.

Morgan stared at her trying badly not to laugh or smirk at her. She had to turn her head away once more. "I see, I get it now," she said quietly.

The Queen didn't hear or chose not to reply to that. Her voice was back to her usual cold calmness. "Our previous attempts to assimilate them were all direct assaults, they failed. So we've created a more effective strategy."

"More than one ship?" Morgan muttered.

"No. We need something far more subtle. A detonated biogenic charge in Earth's atmosphere will infect all lifeforms. Assimilation would be gradual. By the time they found out what was happening, half their population would be drones," the Queen said.

The funny image of the bitter Queen of the Borg ranting about her mother was ancient history. What she suggested horrified Morgan she had trouble getting her words out. "What's, why bother? It would take years. It's far more likely to be caught and stopped. You'd have to get close to do it, so it couldn't happen."

"I'm sure taking pity on a poor orphaned teenaged girl, the only survivor of Voyager, will have no trouble getting *through the door*, so to speak," the Queen smiled.

Any remaining colour drained from Morgan's face, making her paler than any of the Borg there. "What, but you said... Detonate a charge."

"The delivery system is still a work in progress. For the moment interface with the central alcove, you may work on the virus there," the Queen said.

Morgan shook her head, her folded arms were less defiant and more like a scared self hug. The Queen quietly approached her, looking her straight in the eye.

"Why do you resist? They abandoned you. Twice," she hissed. Morgan tried to look away but she followed her every move. "You do not belong with them, you are merely a copy to them. I know better. You've surpassed them, you are but one step away from perfection. I can help you. They cannot. This is but another assimilation, no difference."

"It is to me, this is my species you're talking about here. I'm not going to help you destroy them," Morgan said angrily. "Or anyone for that matter."

"There you go again. My species, I'm not. I don't," the Queen groaned. "There is no me, there is only us. One mind."

Morgan rolled her eyes to the left, then to the right. "I have a task for you. I want you to do this. I detected them. I see this." The Queen's stare turned even colder somehow. "Practice what you preach, hmm?"

"You're merely imitating your foul mother. You sound like a mindless automaton. Comply, or we we will bring Voyager here and make you watch, starting with your family," the Queen said harshly.

"Go ahead, it won't get you anywhere," Morgan said.

The Queen wavered briefly. "I beg to differ, their..."

Morgan locked on with her own stare and even closed the gap between them with a few steps. "You won't. You know it as well as I do. Threatening them is the only way you can control me." She smiled, "and you still can't."

"Your resistance is nought but hope that they will rescue you. Once that is vanquished..." the Queen said smugly.

"Bring them here and you'll lose your only hold on me. You think I'll stay, think I'll hold back with them gone?" Morgan said with another step forward, her stare turning more and more Janeway like. "I won't help you and I think that was never what you wanted. Not really. A *lowly* Human bested you and you can't handle it. Let me tell you, I'm much more of a pain in the ass than *her*."

To her annoyance and worry, the Queen reacted with disinterest. "Very well. If you will not co-operate, then I'm sure Janeway will appreciate being assimilated by her very own daughter. I don't know why I didn't think of it before."

The entire chamber of drones stopped what they were doing to surround them. Morgan flinched, they all stared in her general direction.

The Queen made the final step forward, they were almost nose to nose. "Ignorant child. Did you think you were the only one of use to us?"

Morgan's mind instantly leapt to Kiara. Anger and fear turned her into a shivering wreck with constantly balling fists. "No, you can't. She's... I won't let you."

The smile that appeared on the Borg Queen's face disgusted her it was so malicious. "You really know nothing, don't you? Don't be afraid," she whispered.

"I'm not afraid of you, heartless bitch," Morgan stammered.

"You are one of us," the Queen said.

Another voice echoed inside Morgan's mind. It was familiar, comforting, it gave her the hope she desperately needed. "*Morgan, we're coming for you, try to hang on.*"

"Mum," Morgan merely mouthed.

"What did you say?" the Queen snapped, her eyes flared.

"Nothing," Morgan replied. The Queen grabbed Morgan's chin with her right hand. It was immediately slapped away.

"Janeway!" the Queen barked, hatred spewed from every inch of her.

The Delta Flyer:

Kathryn once more stood behind James, watching what he was doing carefully, both her arms resting across the back of his chair.

"I've got her. There's a large structure about six hundred kilometres away," James said.

Kathryn patted the chair as if it were his shoulder. "Good job. Tom set a course."

"Already on it," Tom responded.

"She's here," the Queen growled. Her manic marching around in circles was making the drones all dizzy. "Close. She thought that I wouldn't notice the blatant message to one of my own?"

"It's through subspace. It doesn't tell you where she is whatsoever," Morgan said.

The Queen wasn't listening. "We can't detect her vessel. But I'll get her. I will," she said within a croak. Her next stomp off was toward a particular drone. "You, it's your fault. You and your showoff wife. Your precious daughter told her, didn't she?"

The drone's eyes slipped barely to the left. Still, the Queen spotted it. "Again?" she barked in contempt. Half of the drones moved to surround them both instead, the rest seemed to miss the memo and only moved when they did. "Take him apart, I'm tired of this." Two of them dragged the first drone away kicking and screaming.

"Connection issues?" Morgan said smarmily once he was gone.

"Hmph. No matter. We assimilated this multi adaptive shielding your mother stole. We will adapt," the Queen sneered.

Morgan's brief smugness was instantly wiped away.

Tom glanced up, his face turning an interesting pale green. "That cube's altered course, coming right for us."

"They found us. Re-modulate the shields, evasive maneuvers," Kathryn ordered.

While everyone hurriedly worked, the shuttle rumbled for a couple of seconds, then stopped. Tom sighed in relief and wiped the sweat from his brow. "Oh, false alarm. It's gone."

Kathryn rolled her eyes. She rewarded him for that with a nice slap across the back of the head. He whined like a child and rubbed it with a pout on his face.

"James, have you got her location narrowed down yet?" she asked.

"It looks to be a small ship buried inside the structure. She seems to be in the centre of it, a large room with a few lifesigns," James replied, twisting his face for no reason Kathryn could see.

Jessie though frowned with worry. "Is it like a diamond?"

"Wishful thinking?" Tom snickered to himself. It didn't go unheard. Jessie glared into his back.

James nodded, "yeah, you could say that. It's familiar, not sure why."

Kathryn turned her attention to Jessie, "why? Something we should know?"

"I think I do. It's like command central, in a way," Jessie replied with distaste. It eased the confused expression on James' face, but it did nothing for hers.

"Command central, so like the Queen Bee's Ready Room?" Tom questioned.

"I hope for your sake you're not comparing," Kathryn said dangerously.

Jessie scrunched her own face nervously, gritting her teeth. "Could be. My memory of it is hazy."

"Better than mine," James commented.

Kathryn shrugged it off as if it were nothing. "Can we transport Morgan out?"

Jessie glanced up at her to shake her head. "We're too far."

"Say no more," Tom said. "Please."

The Borg Queen's lips curled as she turned her back on her captive. "We have their ship. Federation shuttlecraft. Four lifeforms, one hologram."

Morgan scoffed. "Yeah right. If you captured them you'd be cackling evilly and have already beamed her here for me to watch. I don't buy it." The Queen clenched her jaw, fire had replaced her eyeballs. "What's wrong, is she besting you again?"

The Delta Flyer gently approached one of the many huge structures. They came to a stop so close they'd see people in the windows if there were any.

"Nope, still can't. It must be too heavily shielded," Jessie said.

"Can we beam into one of the adjoining corridors?" Kathryn asked.

"We could do," James replied.

"Time for the bio dampeners," Kathryn smiled.

The Doctor was on the case, he quickly brought out two devices from a case. Kathryn walked over while gesturing her finger at James. He knew that meant to join her. Jessie didn't look too happy about it. The Doctor wrapped the first device around Kathryn's forearm first.

"Hold this position. Jessie take Tactical until we return," she ordered. Jessie edged out her seat unenthusiastically to swap over. "Keep a weapons lock on that room, standby to fire on my command."

Jessie was barely an inch away from sitting on the chair when she froze. Instead she swung around to look behind her with a glare so strong Kathryn was a little envious of it. "What? I'm not shooting while you two are still there!"

James quickly turned aside to not only grab a couple of phaser rifles, but avoid the stare. The Doctor huffed as he missed him by a matter of seconds. He moved to compensate.

"Fine, I'm sure Tom will do it," Kathryn said.

Tom turned his chair around looking deeply offended. "Hey, she's not touching my helm controls."

Jessie shuddered, looking disgusted. "No I don't really want to do that either."

Kathryn sighed, not out of impatience like anyone expected, but understanding. She shared a brief glance at James who still knew better than to look in Jessie's direction right now. "It shouldn't come to that."

"Maybe I'd be more helpful over there with you," Jessie suggested.

James couldn't help it, he glanced over to her anyway. Jessie's glare was long gone, worry was in its place.

"If we run into trouble, we might need you here," Kathryn said. By her tone her mind was more than made up, she was ready to go. James handed her one of the rifles, or tried to. She shook her head and pointed at the one he chose. "No, I always take that one."

"They're the same," James said plainly. He shrugged and swapped them.

"Energise," Kathryn ordered.

Moments later the pair were strolling down one of the many Borg corridors. James kept an eye on any Borg drones that passed by or were slightly close. Kathryn only kept her gaze trained straight ahead, she only was looking for one.

She didn't see the Borg forcefield coming until she hit it. "Damn it. Is there another route, preferably a quick one?"

James quickly looked down at a tricorder in his left hand, "I doubt it'll matter. They'll probably be in all possible ones." He didn't have to look up to see the expression that told him to check anyway.

While he was doing that a drone walked by like they weren't even there. It also acted as if the forcefield wasn't either. Kathryn stared after him. "Only Borg can walk through them. Of course."

"Yeah makes sense," James mumbled. He gave her the tricorder to try and touch the forcefield himself. It bounced his hand back too. "Nope not Borg enough."

Kathryn wasn't put off though. "I didn't think you would be. I've got a better idea."

"Does it involve further Borg slapping?" James asked with a smile.

Kathryn chuckled, she turned her head toward him with a twinkle in her eye. "That's Plan B. Did the Doc give you the subdermal probe?"

"I'm..." James hesitated. "Not sure. He listed off some Hansen inventions and I only grabbed the ones I think I understood." He checked his pocket to fish out a few items.

Kathryn shook her head as she took one of them. "Lucky guess," she smirked.

The Delta Flyer hovered on the holographic screen in front of the Queen and Morgan, the latter tensed.

"It's not too late to save them," the Queen said, she turned to look at her captor. Morgan folded her arms again and she gave the queen an icy death glare. "As you wish."

"They've isolated our shields again," Jessie stuttered.

Tom tried to talk through the lump in his throat, it came out as a croak, "three vessels this time. They're definitely coming."

"Re-modulating, make sure you move slightly when I give you the ok," Jessie said.

"Not gonna argue with Captain Jessie right now," Tom muttered.

The Doctor could only stare at the cubes in fear.

On the screen, the Delta Flyer shimmered out of sight. The Queen glared at the monitor as if it were at fault.

Morgan smirked, "they're not stupid."

"It's time for a more aggressive approach," the Queen said.

The Delta Flyer:

The shuttle shook violently.

"I thought they couldn't see us," the Doctor stuttered.

"They can't, they're firing blind," Tom said.

Kathryn injected a sleeping drone with the probe. She stepped back and gestured to James. "Wake him."

James patted both of his pockets, mouthing *how?* She shook her head with a *I don't know*. He rolled his eyes and stepped up to join the drone on the raised alcove. He tapped in something on the small panel beside the arm.

The drone woke up and stepped down. James did as well and readied the tricorder.

"Ah, good. Now it..." Kathryn said cheerily until it wandered off in the opposite direction to the forcefield. "Son of a bitch."

James sniggered, "yeah, I saw that coming a mile off." Kathryn groaned and was ready to take on Plan B herself when James handed her the tricorder. "Get ready."

"For what?" she asked cautiously.

James didn't answer, he followed the drone to her shock and concern.

Everyone clung on as the Flyer was rocked many more times, triggering sparks flying everywhere.

"It's not working anymore. They keep adapting to every new frequency I put in," Jessie said, frantically tapping the console in between her left hand dabbing her brow.

Kathryn shook her head, her eyes had rolled up and remained there.

The Borg drone she had probed now was on the other side of the forcefield, looking dazed as it stumbled onto its feet.

James walked back to join her and stared at her curiously.

"Field modulation 324.95," she said in monotone. Her eyes were sharp, clearly annoyed.

"What?" James asked innocently. Kathryn sighed, she pointed at her neural dampener. James walked over to work on it. "It was only a push, he didn't see me."

"Mmmhmm," she said with judgement. He shrugged it off, then pulled back as he was done. "Okay. Let's do this." She walked toward the forcefield and straight through it. The dampener though wasn't happy about it, it sparked before going off.

James cringed, "hang on, I'll join..." His hand flew to his own.

"No!" Kathryn snapped. "Someone needs to disable the shield matrix around that room. I trust you can handle that without anymore pushing and *slapping*?" James answered with an unsure murmur. "I'll pretend I didn't hear that, be careful." She hurried off.

James sighed, "you too."

No sooner had she gone, a trio of drones turned into his corridor and began to walk toward him. A slight head turn over his shoulder and he smiled, the rifle raised.

His whole head was sweating, Tom could barely see through the rain.

"We are the Borg, you will be assimilated..."

"Resistance is futile," the Queen said. On the screen one of the Borg ships had put a tractor beam on the Flyer. "You have failed them."

"You," Morgan growled in fury, she took a swing at her. The Queen grabbed her wrist in time.

"We thought you'd be an asset to us, we were wrong. You are weak," the Queen said.

"Get your hands off her!" Kathryn snarled as she entered the room, phaser rifle pointed at the Queen.

"Janeway!" the Queen hissed. Morgan pulled her arm away from her.

"Call all of them off or I'll destroy you." Kathryn icily said.

The Queen tried to hold back her rage, "your weapon is useless."

"Don't be so sure. I've got someone here who'll have already torn down the shields around this room," Kathryn said.

The Queen smiled maliciously, "oh him, yes. It's always nice to have a backup..." She turned her head robotically toward Morgan, "plan."

Kathryn set her deathglare to pulverise while taking a few steps forward. She tapped her commbadge. "Janeway to Flyer, status."

"Jess has targeted the chamber, Captain. We're ready for your order," Tom's voice replied.

"Let her go or I'll give the order to fire," Kathryn said.

"You'll be destroyed as well, along with your daughter," the Queen said.

"Better than being one of you," Kathryn said. Drones approached her. "Jessie, torpedos full spread, fire on my command!"

The Borg Queen closed her eyes briefly, sighing impatiently.

"They've released the tractor," Tom's voice said.

"Hold your fire, beam us out of here," Kathryn said.

"The shield's gone up again. I can't beam you out," Jessie's voice stuttered.

Kathryn exchanged death glares with the Borg Queen. In the corner of her eye, her daughter stood tense and unsure what to do. The Captain only directed her eyes toward her, "Morgan, can you shut them down here?"

"Don't listen to her. This is the same woman who dumped you into an escape pod, the same one who shrugged and let you go. You are not Kiara, she has her daughter already. She does not care about you, only your potential," the Queen said.

"Fine assimilate us, because it worked so well the last few times," Kathryn grumbled.

The Borg Queen's eyes narrowed. "I knew it. I knew you were responsible. How did you do it? A virus that disrupts the interlink frequency, planted in your own children. You are... pitiful."

Kathryn bit her lip to avoid laughing, "yeah sure, whatever. I did that."

"Then the solution is clear. You will assist the collective as drones," the Queen said. Most of the drones in the room moved in closer to Morgan and Kathryn. "Assimilate Janeway first."

"Mum, target the power node above the central alcove, it'll disrupt her command interface," Morgan said quickly.

The Queen glared at her. Kathryn eagerly fired her phaser rifle up at the central alcove, it exploded. Seconds later Morgan and Kathryn beamed away.

The Delta Flyer:

The Doctor scanned Morgan as she sat at the back of the shuttle.

"Welcome back," he said with a smile.

"Thanks," Morgan said gratefully.

Kathryn hurried back to standing in between Tactical and Opps. Jessie squeezed past her to retake her previous console, James walked around behind her to get to Tactical. The shuttle shook from weapons fire to make it a touch harder than it already was.

"Three vessels closing fast!" Tom shouted.

"Evasive maneuvers until transwarp's ready to go," Kathryn ordered.

Another hit got James worried, "weapons are down."

"Where's Seven when you need her?" Kathryn mumbled, confusing everyone in more ways than one.

"Transwarp in six, five, four, three," Tom said, his hand hovering over the lever.

Two cubes and the diamond chased the Flyer, which danced around their weapons fire. A few managed to land. The shuttle glowed before shooting off into the green corridor. The small diamond ship gave chase, hopping straight into the conduit along with them.

"One of the Borg ships is right behind us, it got into our conduit right before it closed," James said.

Kathryn grunted, "of course they did. Keep us on course."

The shuttle shook as torpedos hammered the shields. One made Tom's panel scream at him.

"Direct hit to the port nacelle, we're venting plasma," he stammered.

"Hang on, re-routing power," Jessie said from her previous station.

Tom shook his head, "it's not enough. I'll need thirty more teradynes at least or we'll lose transwarp."

"Reroute some power from life support," Kathryn said.

"Captain!" the Doctor snapped.

Kathryn threw her head back over her shoulder, "I don't know why you're the one panicking. It's not going to kill us immediately." She turned back. "Do it."

Jessie looked uneasy, "right."

Voyager:

Chakotay had barely moved from his spot in the middle of the bridge, staring at the viewscreen, waiting for any sign of the Delta Flyer. B'Elanna kept a watchful eye on him, previously at the Engineering station, now in Seven's usual spot. In Tom's place at helm, Craig sat, hoping he wouldn't have to do anything too complicated.

"Commander," Tuvok's voice broke the ice. "Sensors are picking up transwarp conduit off our port bow, distance thirty thousand kilometres."

"Battlestations," Chakotay ordered. The lights dimmed as Red Alert began.

The Delta Flyer:

"How long until we reach our rendezvous, Tom?" Kathryn asked.

"Ten seconds," Tom replied.

"The Borg vessel?" Kathryn asked.

"Right behind us, they're trying to lock on a tractor beam," James replied.

Morgan tried to get up so she could help, another weapons blast knocked her back into the seat. The Doctor clicked his tongue disapprovingly.

"Shield modulation should deflect it," Jessie said. She nodded when it worked.

"Five, four, three.." Tom said.

"Yes, we get the point!" Jessie snapped.

The shuttle left the conduit and re-entered normal space. Voyager waited for them directly ahead.

Voyager:

"They're through," B'Elanna said.

Chakotay breathed a huge sigh of relief, "Voyager to Delta Flyer. Report?"

"We've got her back but that Drama Queen is right behind us."

Chakotay resisted a smile for now. "Tuvok torpedoes full spread, aim them at the conduit's perimetre."

"Commander?" Tuvok said with an eyebrow raise.

"It should destabilise the matter stream. Anything inside the conduit within a light year of the opening will hit one hell of a road block," Chakotay explained. B'Elanna couldn't help but smirk at his plan.

Tuvok did as he was ordered to. "Torpedoes locked."

"Fire!" Chakotay barked.

The Delta Flyer:

All they saw through the glass was the torpedoes flying out of Voyager and over their heads. Kathryn followed them with a disgruntled expression.

"They've hit the opening," Jessie told her.

Kathryn slapped her commbadge, "Voyager, tell Tuvok..."

"We've closed the conduit, no sign of Borg activity," Chakotay's voice said.

Kathryn's face softened in an instant, "good job." Everyone heard the sigh of relief over the other side of the comm. "Clear us for docking, we're coming home."

Voyager:

"Commander, I'm detecting Borg signatures, lots of them," Harry said. "I'm not going to bother counting them as I always get a scolding."

"I thought the conduit had collapsed," Chakotay's brow furrowed in concern.

"It did," Tuvok said.

Chakotay was more worried about Kathryn's reaction to this news than any Borg. Still, he had to tell her. "Captain, we've got company."

"Here they come," B'Elanna said.

On the viewscreen the conduit opened and bits of the Borg ship hurtled out.

"You're right. I do like them in pieces," Kathryn's voice chuckled.

Chakotay smirked and shook his head. "Yeah," he mouthed.

Captain's Log Supplemental: Using the transwarp coil we have managed to travel twenty thousand light years. Seven claimed we've skipped fifteen years of our journey, I think the silly bint must be losing the plot. I've told the Doctor to change her batteries. On another note the aliens that accused us of coffee theft tried to attack us before the flight. Wish I could've seen their faces.

We're still left with many unanswered questions. Morgan's back from her ordeal with the Borg and that's all that matters for the time being.

"You do know you're grounded, right?" Kathryn said.

Morgan chuckled even with Kathryn's straight, stern face. When it didn't let up her laughter faded out. "I pushed a drone into a maturation pod. The kid punched him in the nose."

Kathryn broke out into a full on grin. Proud, with a funny mental image. "How old was he?"

"She. Dunno, 'bout five," Morgan replied.

"Ah, here," Kathryn said while quickly typing something onto a PADD. She handed it over to the girl. "Buy whatever you want."

Morgan smiled sneakily, "I knew I wasn't grounded."

"Oh you were, but rewards for Borg smacking are heavily rewarded and outweigh a lot of misdemeanors. Ask James, keeps him out of the brig," Chakotay joked.

"Fool slapping," Kathryn corrected him.

"Um right," Morgan laughed nervously as she looked at the PADD. Her eyes bugged out at the number written on it. "Oh wow, now I can get that retractable knife."

Chakotay's face turned a little pale, while Kathryn winced and snatched it back. She tried to anyway, Morgan kept a tight hold of it. Her daughter squeaked a little and pouted. "No weapons," Kathryn said sharply.

"But why? You said I could buy what I wanted," Morgan whimpered.

"Almost anything. I don't want you... putting your eye out or anything," Chakotay stuttered, clearly improvising.

"What kind of idiot stabs themselves in the eye?" Morgan huffed.

Neelix's wails were overpowering everyone's conversations when Morgan walked in. She saw his head buried in folded arms, a knife stained with red on the counter and a crewman trying to comfort him. "Oh," she said, hurrying away to find a table.

Craig spotted her and beckoned her over to the already full table of him, James, Jessie, Kiara, Naomi and Tani. As she approached James pulled a chair from the neighbouring table, and the others scooted aside a bit to let her in.

"What's that about?" she had to shout so they heard her.

Jessie cleared her throat before doing the same, "he burnt his jelly and tomato cake. Thank god!"

Morgan hoped she misheard because of the noise and did a triple take. Jessie's face told her she didn't.

Thankfully the noise abruptly ended. A few looked over to find he was gone, likely whisked away to Sickbay.

"Tomato. Cake. Jelly," Morgan said to make sure. The others at the table nodded. "The knife?"

"That's the only bit of this that makes sense. He tried to cut it and yeah, epic rebound," Craig sniggered.

Morgan giggled in relief and at the image. "Oh, at least he didn't put his eye out."

James shrugged, "looks like he did. Handle. Slight bump, tears. Not enough to put him off licking the red goo from the knife."

"Eeew," Morgan cringed. Her disgust didn't last, she noticed the remains of a feast laid out on the table. Sausage rolls, sandwiches, crisps, pizza slices, a few morsels of chips in a bowl, onion rings, cheese, and the almost full bowl of fruit no one wanted. James nodded and gestured his hand out. She took the hint and dug in too.

"Courtesy of the Janeway Hates Mostly Everyone fund," Jessie smiled. She lowered her voice to a whisper, "but keep it to yourself. If anyone asks, we all shared the payment."

"Yeah, mum gave me a month's worth I dunno what to do with," Morgan said.

Kiara looked to her with interest, "did you slap someone too Morgan?" Morgan's smile turned sly. "Aaaw, I want to see."

"Next time," Morgan said with a wink.

"So, how are you?" Craig asked. "Do you want to talk about it?"

Tani nudged him with her elbow. "Oy, no pushy."

"Sorry," Craig cringed and rubbed his arm.

"No it's fine. I... there's not really much to tell," Morgan said, glancing toward Kiara.

"Mummy said you were kidnapped by an ugly batty cow," she said. Most of the table reacted with similar amusement. "Was mad she didn't tell until came back."

Morgan felt a little relieved that she knew. Still, she had no idea where to start or what to even mention. One particular part stuck out the most. "The Borg Queen can throw one hell of a tantrum."

The comment earned her a few sniggers and the kids giggles.

"Did the Tantrum Queen explain why she only wanted you?" Jessie asked. "Not that I wanted that honour or anything."

"I told mum that she wants to assimilate Earth and she needed me, someone who wasn't attached to it," Morgan replied. "But she didn't need me. I think, no I know she has it in for mum and that's why she picked me over you guys or Seven. Or Voyager for that matter."

"Weird," James frowned. "The Borg were never like that before."

"She mentioned disconnect issues. Drones wouldn't respond right away, she had to vocally order people. Probably been happening since you and Jess," Morgan answered uneasily.

"We never did figure that one out, did we?" Craig sighed.

Tani's attention leveled up twice, her eyes were sparkling in James' direction, "oh so you were a Borg drone too?"

"Just for a second or two," James answered meekly.

"The Queen didn't know why it was happening either," Morgan said. "It's odd that it's happened twice."

Tani giggled and batted her eyes, "so we have that in common. I wonder what else."

James was very thankful Craig and Jessie were in between them. Morgan on his other side shook her head at her friend, hoping she'd listen to her.

"Oh my god," Jessie groaned before glancing at the girl. "Get the very awkward hint."

Tani scowled at her back, "he's a grown man now, back off mummy."

Jessie gasped, fire in her eyes she edged out of her seat. "What did you call..."

"You know what's weird?" Morgan quickly blurted out. It worked for the moment, Jessie froze mid getting up with a deathglare on her face. "The Borg Queen knew about my botched assimilation. That future was erased, wasn't it?"

"Hmm, good point. Creepy," Tani said as if nothing happened.

"The translink dream message thing, she was in your head. Maybe that's why," Craig suggested.

James laughed a little awkwardly, still worried about the ticking time bomb sitting next to him. "Maybe, but the Queen would have to know about her first to know to do that."

Craig's face fell. "Oh right, duh."

"I figured with the original sphere vanishing, the Queen wasn't affected by the temporal nanoprobe," Morgan said with a shrug. She finished off the tiny chips remaining, they only made her want more. "Never mind, I'll think about it later. I should get the next round." She stood back up.

Craig smiled up at her, "good plan. I'll help you carry them." He did too.

Kiara's face lit up, "ooh ooh. Time for cakes and ice cream. Choccy biscuits."

Naomi disagreed, "ice cream would melt. Muffins and doughnuts."

"I dunno. Kids are annoying enough without sugar," Morgan said. Both girls took the insult well, smiling innocently in Kiara's case. "Ha, you think I'm gonna fall for that?"

"How about more chips and pizza, they were the popular ones and you didn't get much of them," Craig suggested, disappointing both kids.

"Yeah. If you want something sweet so badly, there's always Neelix's tomato coal cake," Morgan said using an innocent smile of her own.

Kiara's smile turned into a pretend scowl, she followed that with a tongue sticking out. "You're mean."

Morgan giggled at her, "yes we are."

THE END