

## Episode 1.24 Memories of Fury

Chakotay struggled on his way into the Ready Room, lugging a massive contraption which had moveable arms on the top. Everytime they all rotated around to bump into each other the weight shifted, almost making him topple over. Kathryn would've been more amused, or irritated by it if it was the strangest thing she'd seen that day. Thanks to the last thing she had resorted to sitting on the edge of her desk instead of her seat.

"Whatever it is, I'm sure Seven will want it in her room," she said.

One last clatter and Chakotay decided to put it down right there, beside the door. He then wiped the rivers worth of sweat from his brow. "It's apparently used in a sport, like extreme tennis or something."

"I'm starting to think these space station managers are dumping all of their unwanted junk on us, with the pretense of gift showering," Kathryn said, shuffling a bit uncomfortably. Her eye fell on the random clutter that had taken over her office.

"Oh I don't know. The plant is nice, if a bit big," Chakotay commented, pointing behind her.

Kathryn pulled a face to show her disagreement, then a branch dropped to her shoulder, she instinctively tried to swat it away but it didn't budge. "If you want it, be my guest." She jumped, yelped briefly and looked around at the gigantic yet harmless looking plant not only sitting on her desk, but overtaking it as well as her chair. When she turned her head forward again, the nearby branches stuck to her hair. "Please."

"Is it a prehensile type?" Chakotay wondered while watching them.

"It's definitely a stuck to my ass type," Kathryn grumbled. When she tried to get up the plant fought back, briefly tugging her a bit before she separated from it almost completely. One stubborn thorny vine was still lodged in her hair. "How was the awaymission, anyhow?"

"Uneventful," Chakotay shrugged, he looked almost bored. "We went in, mined the deuterium, then came back. Though next time we need a mining party perhaps leave Neelix, or Tom, or me out of it."

Kathryn seemed nonchalant about it, "it is a bit silly that we sent four senior officers for a so called routine mission, but it's the only way we can have 100% no fatality missions."

"I dunno about that," Chakotay smiled cheekily, and a little tiredly.

"But if I send Seven that kinda defeats the object," Kathryn said.

"Yeah well, two days in of nonstop Tom banter, his and Neelix's idea of entertainment almost nearly broke the record. Honestly, I'm trying to figure out what I've done to offend you so," Chakotay said with a slight laugh.

The doors opened once more, this time for Morgan to stroll straight in.

"Yes come in, make yourself at home," Kathryn said far too sarcastically, hoping that Morgan would sense it as she normally didn't.

Her daughter did stop and pull a bemused face at her. "No thanks, I'm just here as I think I left my sandwich behind."

"No you didn't, you ate it. Both of them, and the rest of mine," Kathryn said.

Morgan looked disappointed as she turned to leave, until she spotted the strange contraption Chakotay brought in. Her eyes lit up. "Ooh dibs."

"Careful, that's..." Chakotay tried to warn her. Morgan picked it up with little effort and walked out of the room with it, the pair spotted a couple of crewmembers ducking out of her and its way before the doors shut. It left her father stuttering slightly, "heavy but not for Borg, I guess."

"That's not good," Kathryn said warily.

An image of Morgan spinning the contraption intentionally in Seven's face leapt into Chakotay's head. He doubted though Kathryn had the same image with what she said. "Yeah, I'll get her back." He turned to leave.

"No!" Kathryn abruptly shouted, freezing him. When he turned back he expected to see the usual angry expression, instead he saw a rather sheepish embarrassed Captain Janeway. He wished he had a camera to capture the rare moment. "Can you..." she said, grasping the vine stuck in her hair, "little help?" Chakotay rushed to her aid.

While they were more than a little occupied the door chimed a few times. Tuvok hurried inside, expecting something a little more threatening to be happening. When Kathryn noticed him she tried to pretend nothing was wrong, despite her frazzled hair and Chakotay still trying to untangle the plant from her. Tuvok took the hint and handed her a PADD. "This morning's Security report."

Kathryn had a brief skim of it, then something strange about it caught her eye; the text Page 1 of 5. She sighed irritably, "what's that Tom Paris done now?"

"His neighbours complained his television was too loud," Tuvok replied, raising an eyebrow.

"Did he pick that thing up from that AU Earth?" Kathryn groaned, then she looked confused. "Wait, when did that little creep have a chance to leave the rejects island?"

"The misdemeanors are not all Lieutenant Paris," Tuvok said. "The vast majority belong to our aliens guests we invited from the Markonian outpost."

Chakotay gave up for the moment, seriously contemplating scissors and going into hiding after, and turned to the Commander. "Vast majority? We're improving."

Kathryn scowled at the PADD, "the Doctor tortured me for two hours, what?" Chakotay stared at her with eyes wide. Meanwhile she waved the PADD at Tuvok's face accusingly, "why isn't this on the first page?"

"Our new crewmembers did not know to avoid the Doctor's slideshow presentations," Tuvok answered calmly.

Chakotay sniggered, "they do now."

Kathryn groaned while dumping the report on her desk as far away from the plant as possible, it still tried to stick to her hand. "Add arson to that list, Commander. This thing's going up."

"Might want to wait until..." Chakotay laughed nervously. Kathryn's hand instinctively leapt up to the vine still in her hair.

"Fine. For now it goes to the Cargo Bay. Seven's, not the other. I don't want tomorrow's report to include Neelix complaining he's stuck and he's left the stove on," Kathryn snarled.

"Page Four," Tuvok said.

Chakotay was curious but on the wrong side of the desk to quench it. Kathryn though was only annoyed. "How do you suggest we move it without getting stuck ourselves?" he asked.

"Hello, arson. Are you idiots even listening to me?" Kathryn snapped.

"Well I..." Tuvok carefully started to respond, but Kathryn's commbadge chirping interrupted him.

*"Kim to Janeway. I know you asked not to be disturbed, but we need you on the Bridge."*

Kathryn looked at Chakotay, hinting for him to finish the job. He didn't dare, he ran out quickly as possible. To her dismay Tuvok did as well.

"We're receiving a distress call from a shuttle sized ship that's approaching," Harry reported to them.

"Lifesigns?" Chakotay questioned.

"One," Harry answered. His eyes nearly bugged out.

Chakotay was curious at his reaction, "what?"

Harry pointed at him. Chakotay gingerly turned around to find Kathryn standing behind him, scowling fiercely. Her hair still frazzled, but worst of all a piece of it was in her hand along with the root, detached from both her head and the plant. "I hope you're happy," she whispered threateningly.

Chakotay trembled, all of the colour in his cheeks drained to completely white. He escaped to his chair for the time being.

"So er distress, lifesign," Harry whimpered.

"That's looking on the bright side," Jessie said, mid cringe with some sympathy in her eyes.

"I'm not sure this needed urgent attention from the Captain," Kathryn said flatly.

Harry shrunk a couple of inches. "It's Ocampo."

The whole bridge was stunned. No more so than Chakotay, but only because the root and some hair ended up in his face.

"We're being hailed," Tuvok said.

Kathryn cleared her throat and tried in vain to fix her hair so the new split ends weren't so obvious. "On screen."

It had been years but still the bridge crew were not prepared when the face that appeared on the screen looked so much older than the last time they saw her. The woman looked haggard, almost breathless.

"Kes?" Kathryn stuttered.

"Captain Janeway," the woman confirmed. "I need your help. Will you please give me permission to come aboard?"

Kathryn's face softened, the plant business a distant memory. "Of course, what's happened?"

"Please, let me come aboard," Kes said, breathing deeply. The screen changed back to a view of an alien sized shuttlecraft.

"Okay, prepare the docking port, lower the shields," Kathryn ordered. "Tell the Doctor, looks like he might be needed."

Tuvok's console flared up. "Captain, her ship is accelerating. It's on a collision course."

"What!?" Kathryn bellowed, she even looked at Chakotay accusingly. He mouthed a what and shrugged. "Tractor beam!"

Tom shook his head, "no good, she's coming in too fast, we won't be able to reach..." The bridge shuddered, lights flickered off and on briefly before going off completely.

Kathryn rolled her eyes, exhaling furiously. "Must we do this, every single time!"

"Hull breach on Deck Eight. A transporter was activated directly before impact," Harry reported. The next detail he noticed shook him to the core. He fought off the initial symptoms of a panic attack to stutter, "she's on Deck Thirteen." He didn't wait for the reaction, he ran into the nearby turbolift.

Kathryn literally shook in rage. Everyone feared the worst.

What sounded like explosions echoing beneath them shook the ground at their feet, each one rhythmically.

"Bulkheads on Thirteen are rupturing, section by section," Jessie said shakily, but unlike Harry it wasn't Kathryn's reaction she was worried about. "If she keeps this up..."

"I've located Kes. She's moving through the rupturing sections," Tuvok replied. "I'm detecting high levels of neurogenic energy from her."

Kathryn stared coldly at the blank screen ahead of her. "What does she want with that damn deck, again!"

"Again?" Chakotay blurted out curiously.

"Never mind. Get Security down there," Kathryn said. A few people laughed, assuming she was joking. It was a mistake. Smoke rose from her.

Chakotay hurried over to Tactical, pointing a nod towards Tuvok. He did one in return. They escaped the Bridge as well. Only Jessie noticed, she shook her head in quiet judgement.

The scars of the Deck Thirteen overload were still pretty much visible. Walls had mostly been repaired or replaced, many of them had panels open exposing wiring or in some cases nothing at all yet as it hadn't been installed. The ground in places still appeared to be scorched from the fires. Rooms were left open, the doors had yet to be installed. Repair equipment still lay around all over.

Until their guest arrived, the deck was still an eery quiet with its no power or people to be seen. Every few steps the Ocampo took, the newly built or repaired walls on either side of her contorted like it was made of liquid before shattering into pieces, all in the space of a couple of seconds.

Kes reached her destination. A wide stretch of corridor directly ahead of her, its walls a still obliterated mess from the explosion. She walked, this time causing no damage, only part way down the corridor to stand with her arms outstretched, caressing the air as if the walls were still there. A bitter and yet proud smile on her face. "I found it. The epicentre." Her eyes closed, she took in a deep breath.

She was too absorbed in that to care about the people approaching her from behind.

"Kes?" James said. "What are you doing?"

The now elderly woman slowly looked around over her shoulder, staring with menace.

"You told me, how dangerous it was. Right here. What would happen," James said carefully, all while taking a slow step forward. "Remember?" An arm flew out in front of him, which he eyed in distaste.

Kes narrowed her sunken eyes, "who are you?"

"Really?" James asked meanwhile tiredly toward the arm's owner. He looked back at Kes. "You remember, the Borg drone we disc..."

Seven scowled at him, "don't think I don't know about your many visits on this deck. I will report them all to Commander Tuvok."

"Oh my god, why are you here?" James groaned.

"Her shuttle crashed into my Lab, I stepped out for only a moment to collect a nutritious beverage," Seven huffed.

"Too bad," James rolled his eyes. He turned his attention back to Kes, shoving Seven's arm out of his path so he could take another step. He didn't, the look Kes was giving him literally made his head hurt. "Wait, why are you doing this? It doesn't make any sense."

"State your intentions!" Seven barked.

Kes' eyes rolled over to her, bringing her the severe migraine instead. "You," it wasn't an answer, it was a threat.

Seven didn't see it as that though, "I won't help you destroy this vessel."

"I don't intend to do that," Kes said flippantly. "I intend to return it to its rightful position."

"Explain," Seven demanded, forcing James to roll his eyes again.

"No," Kes said abruptly. Her arms once more outstretched, the invisible walls she pressed against they could faintly see, flowing at her fingertips. Her head held high. White energy crackled all around her, the ship rumbled fiercely, throwing James and Seven nearly off their feet.

While what surrounded her was a blinding white, directly behind Kes was a different story. The already dark deck was fading away into nothing.

James tried to steady himself by clutching whatever was left of a wall nearby, only a couple of feet tall he had to crouch so it didn't help too well. All while his eyes remained fixed on what was happening ahead of him. He shook on his own without the ship's shudders, eyes unusually wide showing not merely fear but terror. A familiar sense of dread built up so high it was burying him.

"No," he barely said through his constricted throat. "Damn." He hurried forward, only to get rudely shoved to the right. The force of it and the ship's tremors floored him.

"Let competent crewmembers take care of this threat," Seven snapped at him. She barely took a step forward. Kes only had to stare at her to direct what looked like a forked lightning strike from the energy surrounding her at the ex-drone. It sent her flying, and when she landed she didn't get back up.

Kes returned to staring upwards. Her body began to shimmer. As James looked up he noticed he could see straight through her, into that piercing darkness behind her. He tried to get up and go for her again, but it was too late. Her body faded away completely.

Only her words remained, floating along the darkness, "I will return as you see fit. To the beginning."

"What?" James only had time to say as the darkness swept toward him like a tidal wave. It snuffed out the white energy instantly. It not only flooded the whole deck, the whole ship soon soaked in the waters of the abyss.

"Fine. For now it goes to the Cargo Bay. Seven's, not the other. I don't want tomorrow's report to include Neelix complaining he's stuck and he's left the stove on," Kathryn snarled.

"Page Four," Tuvok said.

Chakotay was curious but on the wrong side of the desk to quench it. Kathryn though was only annoyed. "How do you suggest we move it without getting stuck ourselves?" he asked.

"Hello, arson. Are you idiots even listening to me?" Kathryn snapped.

"Well I..." Tuvok carefully started to respond. "Perhaps shears?"

Chakotay laughed toward him, "*perhaps* you'd like to do the honours."

"You guys won't be laughing so much when I dump this thing in your showers," Kathryn grumbled.

Tuvok didn't doubt for one second she'd do something like that. He rushed over to the replicator but his commbadge chirping interrupted him.

*"Parsens to Security. We have a situation in the Mess Hall."*

"We know," Kathryn groaned.

Tuvok still tapped to respond, "what kind of situation?"

*"You wouldn't believe me if I told you. We'll need a team or two."*

"Very well," Tuvok said as he walked out.

Kathryn looked at Chakotay, hinting for him to finish the job. He didn't dare, he ran out as quickly as possible. She had to do it herself.

When she reached to grab the vine and pull, something screamed and it wasn't her.

When Security Team One arrived at the Mess Hall, they were immediately jumped on by Kiara. In James' case literally, she ended up bouncing on both of his feet frantically. "Help, Neelix has gone whacky."

"Gone?" Thompson said, genuinely confused. He and the others did note the crewmembers in the Hall were bundled in the nearby corner, but that wasn't really strange since sometimes the smells from the kitchen drifted in one direction and no one wanted to sit there.

James gently placed his hands on the little girl's shoulders to settle her down, and to coax her off his feet so he could crouch down in front of her. "What do you mean by whacky?"

"Well..." Kiara stopped to think about it.

"Stay back!" Neelix shouted from the kitchen. "I won't let you near her."

Everyone heard Naomi's frightened sniffing. The team were instantly worried. "It stinks in here," they heard her cry.

"My god. We must save her," Craig said in an attempted bold, brave voice, but instead his nerves made him squeak.

"Yeah, god knows what he's feeding her," Foster trembled.

James glanced behind him with a sigh. "Hang on. Everything's wrong with this. Why did this happen?"

"We can ask him later, nimrod. Right now there's a girl who needs rescuing from being forced peanut butter pizza," Thompson grumbled. He gestured to the other two, "come on."

Foster and Craig did look a bit torn about listening to him, but the child's whimpering overwrote all the concerns they had. They rushed for the kitchen, spreading out to cover every corner. Only they never got there. James rolled his eyes as Thompson was immediately shot by a phaser as soon as he got within inches of the kitchen, freezing Craig and Foster briefly in their tracks. To his not surprise they ran back over to James and Kiara.

"Yeah we should figure this out first," Craig said.

"Better safe than sorry," Foster added on.

Kiara glanced at them with a scowl, "dumbasses."

James sniggered while the other two looked on with their jaws dropping. "Someone's got to talk to him, at a distance. Either of you or both," he said.

"Wait, why not you?" Foster asked.

"I don't think biting sarcasm will help here," James replied.

Craig shook his head stubbornly, "nuh uh. We're supposed to be a team. Why are you calling all the shots, we're not your lackeys."

Foster looked on with a random crewmember with coffee versus Janeway stare.

To his great relief James replied with a casual, "okay. Fair enough." Then there was nothing but silence, apart from Naomi's occasional eews. James eventually shrugged and whispered to his teammates, "this is part where you tell us your better idea, so we can discuss which we'll do."

Craig laughed sheepishly. "Well yeah, of course. I think, because this is so delicate, we shouldn't charge in. We should try and find out why is he doing that and what his demands are."

"Okay, last time on my idea that was too bossy, now's the Craig's idea conclusion," James said.

Foster quietly sniggered to himself, Kiara meanwhile looked at Craig like he had let off. He mumbled, "it's the principle of the thing, not the plan I was objecting to. You don't have to be so rude and take the piss out of people when..."

"Ah finally, we're on the same page. Go," James smiled.

Craig started to say what but got stuck half way, he looked to Foster for help. "I'll admit, he got you there. Let's go. Maybe leave the talking to me," Foster said.

"Fine," Craig sighed. The pair crouched down and crept toward the kitchen.

James went to stand back up but Kiara tugged on his sleeve. "What are you going to do?"

"What I do best," James smiled at her.

Kiara looked puzzled as she glanced away toward the two other Security officers. "You've already sarcasmed Craigy, what..." She looked back around to find James had gone. It didn't faze her at all, she giggled and sat down a table with a good view of the kitchen.

As Harry walked down the corridor he couldn't shake off the feeling someone was following him. Everytime he glanced over his shoulder to check he'd see no one.

After a fifth time he decided to ignore it and concentrate on his mental list of things to do once he got to his post. The air crackled behind him, stopping him dead in his tracks. This time he barely had the time to glance over his shoulders; the walls at his sides were churning like a choppy tide.

The crackling intensified as movement in the far corner of his eye brought back the feeling of being followed. His curious eye drifted somewhat. A human shaped figure, blurred in his still peripheral. Power seemed to be building up in the walls around and behind him. Harry ran, only for his eardrums to be penetrated by the deafening bang of an explosion behind him. He threw himself down, hoping it would be enough to spare him.

"What's the matter with him?" a passing crewmember asked, their eyes wide in ridicule.

The other crewmember walking with her shrugged, "if I worked with Janeway everyday, that'd be my morning routine too." The two women laughed as they passed by Harry lying on the floor, cowering from an explosion they didn't see.

He scrambled to at least a sitting position and reached out to tell them to stop, only to be confused by the normal looking corridor. "What the?"

Chakotay couldn't believe his eyes when he arrived in the Mess Hall, and he'd seen some strange things in the last few years. Poor Craig was in a hands in the air surrender pose, whilst objects like pans and fruit were tossed over the kitchen counter in his general direction. Foster lay on the floor beside a spatula, groaning with a new bump on his forehead. Kiara had plonked herself down in a chair nearby, occasionally tossing whatever landed on her table back at the kitchen.

The only thing that appeared to be normal was what smelled like dirty socks burning and a grey haze coming from the kitchen. The thought that, that was considered normal made Chakotay briefly snigger.

"Neelix stop, no," Craig whimpered, ducking from a fork which flew over his head. "She's gone, that's not..."

"I know what you're like. You're not getting my Sweeting," Neelix's voice grumbled from the kitchen.

Chakotay grimaced, "what?"

"Dude, she's like four years old. What's the matter with..." Craig commented. He tried to duck again but he wasn't fast enough, a banana flew into his face. He joined Foster on the floor, quite literally in a heap.

"Don't worry my darling, I handled that pervert," Neelix said.

Chakotay was worried when the next voice he heard was Naomi's, "eeew, I don't want any of your stinky pasta Neelix. I'm a good girl."

"Delicious smell isn't it, you have to get the sauce at just the right temperature," Neelix laughed. He jumped up to a standing position and proceeded to tend to the pot with fumes coming from it. He scooped some of the contents with a ladle to offer it to someone out of Chakotay's point of view. Of course what followed were Naomi's cries.

"Neelix, just what in the hell are you..." Chakotay only had time to spit out angrily before he was headbutted by a very hot ladle with burnt goop stuck on it.

"You stay away from my sweet pea!" Neelix screamed at him. He seemed to drop down out of sight once more, revealing James standing behind him.

"Yay!" Naomi laughed in relief.

"Hey!" Kiara though complained about her dad lying on the floor.

"Okay?" James said in disgust as he noticed a bunch of flowers lying on the floor.

"Jay... mes," Seven hissed from the doorway, having witnessed the whole thing. While he was still turning his head she scurried back out of the room holding a flask.

Both Craig and Chakotay stumbled back to their feet. Chakotay checked his head for burns or worse, Neelix's food. Craig spotted him meanwhile. "Chak...?"

"Don't," Chakotay quickly groaned. "Finish that. You'll summon Janeway."

James tried not to snigger, "and yet, you still managed to keep the rhyme *joke* going."

Chakotay painfully blinked. Realising he was right made him roll his eyes, "one day of sanity. That's all I ask."

Craig rubbed his sore cheek while he walked over to peer over the kitchen counter. He could see Neelix lying on his back, sleep murmuring and drooling beside some flowers that seemed to have been ripped several times. Craig looked back up to stare at James, "what did you do? Poison him? Ironic."

"What?" James said, briefly glancing down at the same thing and back again. "No. Vulcan neck pinch."

"Woah, you can do that? Neat," Craig smiled.

James closed his eyes and took in a deep breath. He crouched down to pick the flowers up and put them on the counter beside the stove controls. "Is this what he was feeding Naomi? I wonder what got into him, even he's not that bonkers."

Chakotay walked over, eyeing the what looked to him like bite impressions in the leaves. "I imagine that's what he uses for his seasonings," he guessed, making both boys cringe in disgust. "He said sweetening and darling. I'm sure he only called one person either of those."

James' eyebrows flickered up, "Kes? That's, I'd say weird but that word's lost its oomph."

"Tell me about it," Chakotay said with a half smile. "Get him to Sickbay and turn that off," he said, gesturing to the pot with toxic fumes coming from it. The Commander then turned around to collect his daughter.

"Sure," James mumbled, his hand reaching for the round knob on the counter. He barely grasped it and it came off completely, his eyes widened as it lay in his hand. Craig's did as well, then drifted up to the pot. "Uhoh."

Chakotay froze at the halfway point. "Uhoh? Uhoh what?" He turned around fully expecting a fire or the pot on the floor, but instead the whole room disappeared. In its place was the Ready Room. A figure stood with their back to him by Kathryn's table with a steaming pot of filter coffee in one hand.

"That better not be Neelix's crap," he heard Kathryn say.

A familiar, usually gentle voice chuckled. Only it sounded colder, with a touch of malice. "Oh no, I wouldn't want to poison you or anything. It's my special blend, made from my garden," Kes' voice said.

"You little minx," Kathryn laughed with affection.

Coffee was poured into one of the many cups littering the table. The ship shuddered, spilling some of it. That was when Chakotay noticed Kathryn sporting her old trademark bun of the olden days. Her face red, she had jolted to her feet to charge to the bridge.

His own voice over the comm stopped her. *"Captain, a ship hiding in the nebula fired a warning shot at us. It's the Vidiians."*

Kathryn looked confused, "who the frig are the Vidiians? Are they the morons with the coathangers as hair accessories?"

For a brief second Chakotay was distracted by what he was seeing, he couldn't help but smile.

*"No, that's the Kazon,"* Tom's voice snickered.

"Oh Paris, if you want a concussion you only have to ask," Kathryn muttered as she stomped by Chakotay. The sound of the doors opening and closing told him she had gone.

"What's going on?" Chakotay whispered to himself.

The woman left behind looked over her shoulder to stare directly at him, or so he thought, with a growing smirk and hateful tint in her eyes. Seeing that on the usually kind and gentle Kes' face left him feeling very cold. He looked over his own shoulder and back again, jumping out of his boots as he found someone else standing in front of him.

"What's wrong?" Craig asked in between coughs.

"I..." Chakotay stammered out, only noticing then that the Mess Hall had returned, a lot smokier than before. "I'm not sure."

James looked on, more than a little annoyed. "It's alright. This isn't a life or death situation or anything." The contents of the pot in front of him were bubbling so viciously it was trembling.

"You spaced out. I thought the fumes had gotten to you," Craig said nonchalantly.

The contents of the pot were starting to boil over the edge. On the other side of the counter Foster squeaked fearfully and started to look around the room. James meanwhile ducked down out of sight, Foster assumed to take cover in the worst possible place.

Chakotay was quickly reminded of the nasty smell from before, he pulled a face. "It's possible," he seemed relieved, unaware of the chaos going on behind him.

Foster took off his uniform jacket and threw it over the entire stove. "There, starve it."

"Okay then. I'm just going to esca... skedad... go," Craig said, his calm facade started to crack. Still he side stepped to the door discreetly.

James glanced up to see what Foster did, getting a firsthand glimpse of the jacket catching fire. "What the?" He jumped up to snatch it away and throw it down to the ground. While he was stamping out the fire he glared at the sheepish looking Foster. "I can't believe you're that stupid!"

Of course that got Chakotay's attention. He grabbed Craig's arm before looking around. He wished he was back in the weird Ready Room hallucination once he realised what was going on.

"I panicked," Foster said.

Thompson groaned as he stirred. He rolled over onto his back. "No, I don't want mushy peas with my food. I'm sane," he murmured groggily.

"For god's sake. Turn off the gas," Chakotay barked toward the kitchen. James responded by showing him the broken knob, making the Commander's face turn pale. "There'll be a valve underneath. Turn that and try not to break that too."

"That's... easy for you to say," James said.

Chakotay continued as if he never said anything, "everyone else out." Still he clung onto Craig's arm despite his desperate tugs. Chakotay pointed a nod toward Thompson.

Soon James was on his own, crouched down and staring at the open counter underneath the stove. "I didn't know I'd go out like this," he mumbled to himself.

The Bridge crew got more than a little shock when Kathryn staggered out of the Ready Room. Her eyes wide, hair like she had been electrocuted. Uniform torn, even shredded by the sleeves. A few fresh scratches on her face and hands.

Tuvok approached her to see if she was alright but she walked straight past him as if he didn't. "Captain?"

Kathryn took her seat to sit and stare straight ahead of her, unblinking. It unnerved the crewmember stuck at the helm, even if she was only in her peripheral.

"Security Team One hasn't updated me on the situation in the Mess Hall, however..." Tuvok said. The tiniest of rumbles beneath their feet interrupted him. "Curious," he hurried to check his station.

Jessie looked around in concern, "small explosion in the Mess Hall. No damage, except maybe a singed ceiling and broken cooker."

"Confirmed. Only one lifesign in the Mess Hall at the time, I shall..." Tuvok said.

*"Taylor to Bridge. Yeah, um..."* James' voice sounded very shook. *"I'm gonna need a clean up crew, with a strong constitution. Or bio hazard suits."*

Jessie wasn't sure whether or not to laugh, "are you okay?"

*"Yeah, nothing a crapload of therapy won't ever fix."*

Jessie bit her lip, deciding not to laugh. Tuvok's eyebrow meanwhile shot up, "perhaps you should..."

*"Go in the shower for ten hours. Good idea. Taylor out."*

"I'm struggling to understand how a hostage situation lead to Mr Neelix's concoctions exploding. Unless I am mistaken about the insinuation," Tuvok said.

"Really?" Jessie sniggered. "All he needs to take a hostage is a spoon and the words eat up."

Kathryn's head darted around frantically, "eat what up, where?" She frowned once her panic faded slightly, "when did I get to the Bridge?"

The turbolift door beside Tuvok opened up but no one stepped out of it. Tuvok leaned across his station to check, spotting Harry cautiously peeping around the door. Once he noticed him he hurried out and took his station.

"What's going on with everyone today?" Jessie asked.

Tuvok was wondering the same thing. "Indeed. Mr Paris is also late for his shift. Perhaps it warrants an investigation."

An exhausted B'Elanna returned to her quarters, hoping for some peace and quiet. As soon as she entered she knew that wasn't going to happen. A breakfast bowl lay on the floor, surrounded by soggy cereal and a wet patch was the first to greet her. The second was a whimper from behind the sofa.

"Tom? What the hell are you..." she grumbled as she walked over to confront him. It was a bit of a shock to see Tom shivering fearfully. Her whole demeanour softened. "What happened?"

Tom shakily raised his arm to point at their brand new television. B'Elanna looked to see if he had accidentally put on the music channels again. Only it was playing one of Tom's cheesy Captain Proton-esque sci-fi shows. "I don't get it. What's the problem?"

"The program changed... it was horrible," Tom shook horribly. "Then it turned real, like I was there, watching it play out."

B'Elanna was more than worried now. She knelt down to place a comforting hand on his shoulder. "Watching what play out?"

Tom looked her in the eye. "Kes turned evil and tried to kill us using the Vidiians."

B'Elanna burst out laughing. He was annoyed but not at all surprised though. "That's the stupidest thing I've heard since the Marquis rebel because Tuvok was mindmelding them into mini comas."

"Hey!" Tom huffed to her further amusement. "Worse Case Scenario 3 is an underrated classic. That was an awesome plot twist."

"Yeah okay, Tom. Whatever you say," B'Elanna giggled.

"I'm telling you," Tom grumbled, finally a little calmer than he was when she found him. "Ever since I got back from my awaymission, something's not been right. It can't be just me."

B'Elanna's commbadge chirped, "*Vorik to Torres. Taylor reported a cooker explosion in the Mess Hall. Apparently Neelix was cooking dinner at the time. As soon as we got the report everyone turned ill and have been sent to Sickbay.*"

"See!" Tom said overenthusiastic.

"Really? Sounds like a normal day to me," B'Elanna muttered.

### **Deck Thirteen:**

The walls hummed despite the lack of power reaching them. The sound followed the corridors until it no longer could, having reached the still ruined one and its surrounding rooms without walls. Multiple shadows emerged from seemingly out of nowhere to converge into one in the same spot Kes had stood. It took humanoid form, lying in a foetal position until the sound stopped. Any light that had been shining in that lack of corridor dimmed when the figure awoke and began to sit up.

### **Sickbay:**

"Hmm," the Doctor hummed to no one's surprise.

Kathryn though was still annoyed by it. "One day I'm going to delete that sound from your sodding database."

The Doctor was too engrossed in the results on his station to even notice. "How interesting."

Now his four patients were annoyed. "Oh come on, out with it Doc," Tom complained first.

"Hmm?" the Doctor glanced up in his direction. He noticed them looking at him expectantly and Kathryn visibly twitching. "I have a diagnosis for you, but I can't figure out the reason for it."

"Meaning?" Chakotay questioned.

The Doctor headed for the medical tray to pick out and load a hypospray. "Each one of you is suffering from the typical symptoms of a post traumatic stress disorder," he said as he returned to his patients, reaching Harry first. He stared at him unblinking with bags under his eyes, while the spray was pressed into his neck. "This should help soothe the symptoms a little, but I'm afraid a cure isn't that simple."

"Hang on," Kathryn said when he got to Neelix. He briefly hesitated, thinking she meant what he was doing. "You can't detect why they're getting it. What's so strange about that? Usually this is caused by any number of traumatic events, psychological disorders."

"Apart from Mr Kim who has been a little, offhanded lately," the Doctor began to reply. Harry grunted an objection. "These symptoms developed suddenly, with no provocation. Also there's no neurological damage caused by stress, depression..."

"Also, no traumatic incidents," Chakotay said.

Kathryn gingerly reached for her hair, her bottom lip trembling slightly. "Speak for yourself."

The Doctor turned to her looking concerned. "Why are you covered in so many scratches? What..."

"I don't want to talk about it," Kathryn quickly replied anxiously.

The silence of Deck Thirteen had been broken once again, this time by James' footsteps as he slowly made his way down one of the mostly fixed corridors. His hand absentmindedly kept checking for remnants of the incident in the Mess Hall in his hair or behind the ear, despite the many sonic showers he had.

When he reached a three way junction a slight shuffling sound got his full attention, and so he stopped to look around more attentively. It stopped almost at the same time. He began to take another step forward, before his foot hit the ground he heard clicking sounds coming from behind him. He swung around to see what was causing it but saw nothing.

The shuffling sound returned, coupled with a slight breeze, all in the space of a second. Something large, person sized slammed into him from the right, knocking him clean off his feet.

A defiant, "ah ha, I knew it!" followed by the clomping of high heels running, approached from where he came. They stopped a mere two feet away from him. "Here again, this time I have proof," Seven said whilst tapping away on the PADD her nose was buried in.

Once done she tucked it into her catsuit pocket and folded her arms smugly. "I knew you were up to something on this deck, that there was more to you than you show off in the public eye. Soon everyone will know and they'll appreciate all the hard work I've put into outing you." Her voice turned a little bitter and self pitying, "you've bullied me since day one, and no one believed me. No, they laughed. Oh as if sarcastic moron James would be an abusive saboteur."

She waited, expecting some sort of denial as a reply. When she got nothing it only angered her further. She started to pace and rant, "don't think you could fool me. The explosion, the overloads, all the temporal anomalies *including* the one you framed me for. Oh don't give me that, you know which one!" Seven snapped. "You left that message to sabotage the slipstream, you're a Borg, of course you'd know how."

"But of course nobody takes me seriously. I'm little more than a thorn in your finger," Seven sighed and looked back, expecting a captive audience.

Instead all she saw was James standing back up, brushing his tussled clothes down. Leaves and branches fell everywhere and yet there were still lots of them all over him, including in his hair. That was when she noticed the what looked like a giant man sized fly trap lying on the floor, with snapped branches, most of which were mostly bare with shreds of leaves left over. She was about to say something when she noticed its middle expand like it was breathing.

"What is this?" Seven demanded like she was offended. "How do you keep getting away with this stuff behind my back? I was right here! I should've seen everything."

James coughed various different things like leaves and somehow even a little twig out of his mouth, then went to pick one resting on top of his ear.

"Well I never!" Seven screeched, she stomped off huffily.

James rolled his eyes and shook his head. "I hate this place."

### **Sickbay:**

Everyone were staring at Kathryn expectantly. It made her a little angry, "so this PTSD. Something happened to make you like this." The Doctor started to scan her, or tried to, she kept shoving his arm away.

"I assume dead guys in tutus and forced to live in a timeloop of living with the guilt of destroying Voyager, isn't enough for some," Harry said bitterly in the Doctor's direction.

"If you listened, I excluded you from this strange symptoms out of nowhere situation," the Doctor said.

Chakotay glanced between them both. "If that were the case wouldn't your hallucinations be related to those traumas? Instead you saw an explosion."

"Heard is more accurate," Harry frowned, then nodded. "You're right. It can't be the cause."

"So, Harry witnessed an explosion instead of dead guys and emoing. I'd still exclude him from this since his was missing something everyone else's hallucinations had in common," Kathryn said.

"Kes," Chakotay and Tom both replied at once.

Neelix sadly said, "Sweeting."

Harry shifted on the biobed uncomfortably, he opted to stand instead. "Actually, someone was following me. Maybe."

The Doctor tried not to but he ended up chuckling anyway. "This is ludicrous. You're all acting as if Kes was the boogie man, not the gentle compassionate young woman who wouldn't harm a fly, let alone us."

"I agree. The Kes I saw was cold and bitter, it couldn't have been the real her," Chakotay said.

"Whether or not that was the real her doesn't change the fact that the events you saw, never happened," Kathryn said. All eyes were on her once more. "Kes never brought me any coffee, brewed by her or not, she was a bloody nurse. And what kind of name for a species is the Vidiians anyway?"

Chakotay struggled to keep a straight face, "really? If it weren't for them we'd still be on New Earth."

Kathryn stared back like he was stupid enough to say futile wrong around her. "Exactly, we weren't around then. I never met them because, I can't stress this enough, we weren't around when Voyager met them."

"What about the time when Voyager was split into two and they boarded the other ship," Tom tried to remind her.

Kathryn rolled her eyes, "enough Tom, nobody wants your Voyager fanfiction. Keep your delusions to yourself." Typically once she said all that she remembered the incident. She tried to pretend she hadn't, but her eyes shifting and widening only slightly gave her away. "What concerns me the most are why you're traumatised by events that never happened. Why just you four? When did this start?"

Tom looked down while the other three patients glanced at one another. "When we got back from the awaymission," he said reluctantly.

"Hmm, a shuttle mission. Did anything unusual happen?" the Doctor asked.

"No, other than we didn't crashland on the planet we mined from," Harry replied.

Tom gasped and stared at his friend like he had been slapped by him. "Hey, no crashes happen when I'm at the helm of the Delta Flyer."

Kathryn narrowed her eyes. "I don't believe that for one second." She tapped her commbadge. "Janeway to Torres, gather a team to inspect the Delta Flyer for any damage. Bridge, set a course for the planet the awayteam visited."

"Oh come on," Tom whined.

### **The Conference Room:**

Most of the senior staff had gathered around the table. The ones who had arrived sooner all had a similar bored and annoyed expression on their faces.

"And besides, what's a shuttle crash got to do with Kes volunteering us for organ donations?" Tom complained.

"Oh my god, are you still bitching about that?" Kathryn snapped as soon as she arrived. That finally shut him up to everyone's relief. She walked over to one of the last remaining chairs and sat down, clasping a big mug in her lap. "Are we all here?"

Chakotay looked around the whole table. "We're missing one."

"I wouldn't concern yourself with that," Seven said bitterly.

Jessie looked at her in disgust while Kathryn scanned all of the occupied chairs.

"Indeed, Taylor was involved in the explosion earlier and he did say he would be occupied for ten hours," Tuvok said.

"What?" Kathryn stuttered.

"Of course he didn't tell you why he'd be that long, did he?" Seven asked plainly.

Jessie groaned and turned her head away from the drone. "B'Elanna and I checked out the shuttle. Nothing seemed wrong with it except some dirty pigs left their dishes sitting in the replicator."

Both Tom and Neelix looked sheepish while Harry nodded tiredly.

"So the planet they visited really is the only lead we have," Kathryn said.

"Not exactly. It wouldn't be the first time the Delta Flyer crew had their memories and perceptions altered for someone's amusement. The constant Evil Kes remarks only convinced me further of that," B'Elanna said.

The majority of the Conference Room looked a little uncomfortable. Kathryn narrowed her eyes as she sat back in her chair, "you think this is Seventh Voyager's doing?"

"Don't you?" B'Elanna flippantly answered.

Neelix squeezed his own arms, looking ashamed of himself. "I should've known that wasn't really her. My Kes would never lie about my food being awful and tell me to shove it up my backside."

He got more than a few sniggers for that remark. "Really? Even Kes had her limits, we all saw that," the Doctor chuckled.

"Wait, so in your hallucination you took Kes hostage and tried to forcefully feed her?" Chakotay muttered.

Tom laughed nervously, "then she flipped out, made the Vidiians show up to steal his lungs. She felt bad about it and then erased our memories, which some of us got back." He clapped a few times, "mystery solved."

"What about the explosion?" Harry asked.

"Well," Tom hesitated as he rubbed the back of his neck. "Somebody outside could punch Voyager and consoles would explode. You're reading too much into this."

"He's not wrong," Chakotay smirked.

The doors leading to the Conference Room from the corridor opened. The ones who took a quick glance at it were treat to a haggard James walking in, with some of his hair sticking up and still a couple of branches in it, and his clothes crumpled with a couple of rips in the sleeves.

Tom was one of the witnesses to his arrival and started to snigger far too loudly for his own good.

"What the hell happened to you?" Jessie asked in a higher pitch than usual.

James walked over to take the only remaining seat, hesitating slightly since it was in between Seven and Tom. After the day he had he decided to put up with the glaring and snickering so he could sit down for five minutes.

"That's a very good question," Chakotay said. His eyes fell onto Kathryn still in her ruffled uniform. Her hair though was perfect again, that didn't surprise anyone.

James groaned as he folded his arms across the table and hunched over. He wasn't sure how to answer that until after he clasped his eyes on Kathryn and did a double take. "You... I thought you stopped feeding your plants coffee after that last time."

Kathryn gasped in horror. "How dare you accuse me of such a thing. I wouldn't waste good coffee on that."

"Oh god, you didn't use Neelix's coffee did you?" James stuttered. Kathryn's second gasp nearly made her pass out.

"Ah," Chakotay said in realisation, though everyone else but Tuvok were still confused. "The prehensile. What were you doing in the Ready Room anyway?"

James stared at him partly in disgust, judgement in his eyes, "I wasn't. It must've escaped."

"The prehensile plant, escaped?" Chakotay said in deadpan.

"To where exactly?" Seven pretended to ask him. James slowly looked at her, eyebrow raising. She looked far too smug with that response.

Tuvok tried to force his own eyebrows back down but they had frozen in a near vertical position. "Now that we've humoured Mr Taylor's questionable sense of humour, perhaps we could return to the situation at hand."

Kathryn forcefully cleared her throat behind her fist, "yes well," she said awkwardly. Tuvok sensed it and stared at her curiously. "Since the shuttle is fine and the supplies we got aren't tainted, then it seems very clear to me that whatever happened, happened when the team were on that planet. All of our theories so far should be considered..."

"Even prehensile plants that apparently walk around and attack people?" Chakotay sniggered.

James sighed, "I'd say it was more like it swung around, from the ceiling." He knew it would happen before he said it, but it still annoyed him when most of the room laughed at him. "Fine, it doesn't matter. It's taken care of."

"What did you do, spray it with extra strong weed killer?" Neelix teased.

"No, I showed it a picture of your breakfast menu and it jumped into the nearest escape pod," James said. This time the room was laughing with him.

Neelix was confused though, "well I suppose plants can't eat food. You're so cruel."

"Hmph, you can say that again. I saw what he really did to that poor creature, he be..." Seven snapped.

Jessie rolled her eyes in disgust, "god, I wish there was a menu, posted outside so we can get a warning before we walk in. I'm still a bit queasy after English Breakfast morning last week."

A few people shuddered violently. "Why would you bring that up again?" Tom painfully asked. "It took me days to recycle my uniform enough times so it didn't stink like rotten fried eggs."

"What eggs?" Neelix was confused again. Most of the room looked queasy.

Seven glanced around at people quickly, her brow furrowed in annoyance. "Excuse me. Are you just going to ignore me? I said that the creature was real and Taylor..."

"At least the kitchen will be out of commission for a few days," B'Elanna smiled. "I can drag it out a bit."

Seven made a little grunt. "Wh..." was all she had time to say before the comm beeped.

*"Bridge to Janeway. We've arrived at the designated system. Should be at the planet in a couple of minutes."*

Everyone but Seven hurried to their feet. "On our way," Kathryn said while she did so. Seconds later only Seven was left, folding her arms in a huff.

Kathryn wandered casually to the centre of the Bridge, keeping a careful watch on the viewscreen, as everyone else who had one took their stations. B'Elanna wandered over to the Science station, parallel to Jessie's. The Doctor, Neelix, Craig and James chose to hover around the back for a while.

James unintentionally chose the moment Seven stomped huffily onto the Bridge to take her spot; the console behind the command chairs. Silent rage brewed in her already bulging eyes.

"Scanning the planet surface," Harry reported. Kathryn nodded and began to pace side to side. She didn't have to wait long. "Captain."

Seven meanwhile marched across the bridge to confront James for stealing her position. She was just in front of Harry's station when the turbolift opened and Morgan came sprinting out. The teen didn't even give her a first glance. Before they collided she pushed the exdrone backwards onto a heap on the floor.

Harry had tried his best not to react to any of that, his jaw quivered. Kathryn didn't bother with a smirk on her face and eyes sparkling. "Of course," she said, turning her back on Opps and the whining Borg on her floor.

"Mum, something screwy is going on," Morgan said impatiently.

"And?" Kathryn said as she took her seat. "It's only news when it's not."

Morgan calmed down, she turned up her bottom lip and nodded. "True. But this is really screwy."

"It wasn't a sentient plant trying to eat you, was it?" Chakotay asked with a snigger.

"That's a weird thing to call Seven," Morgan frowned.

Kathryn quietly laughed to herself, "Tom, get us into a lower orbit." She then looked up and over her shoulder toward her daughter. "What happened?"

Morgan wandered down a corridor, not really paying attention to where she was going. She was far more focused on tossing a tricorder from hand to hand. Her foot caught on something, making her stumble as well as dropping the tricorder. It rolled a couple of feet ahead of her.

"Oh shoot," she grumbled quietly. Her eyes flew wide open when she clasped her eyes on the tricorder lying on seemingly nothing. It sat mostly in the centre of gaping hole in the floor. Morgan backed off a step since she was one away from falling into it.

Smoke billowed in front of her. She eyed the edges of the hole, wires and metal still collapsing into the next deck.

Morgan was about to report it when a couple of crewmembers appeared from around the corner ahead of her. They were walking towards it and would surely do that, she figured. Only instead they walked across it as if it wasn't there and gave her a brief glance as they passed by.

She soon found herself edging closer to it to get a better look. As she peered into the chasm below somebody on the deck below her walked under the hole, stopping briefly to look around everywhere but the gaping hole above their head. The floor then reappeared before her eyes like nothing happened.

"What the..." Morgan stammered before turning around completely and running off.

"Ah ha. Was she blonde?" Tom asked in a giddy tone.

Morgan pulled a face, "no. *He* was brunette."

Everyone looked more than a little confused after hearing that.

"Are you sure he wasn't a blonde but the smoke made it look brown?" Seven asked, her eyes flashing toward James.

He clenched his fists which were resting on the console. "We get it, you're a dog with a conspiracy theory. Go bury it somewhere else or someone might smack your nose with something blunt."

Jessie bit her lip to stop herself from laughing. "Bit of a convoluted way of saying she's a obsessive bitch." James merely shrugged in response.

Kathryn twisted her body around so she could look up at Morgan without the pain in her neck getting worse. "He? What did he look like?"

"A bit creepy. I dunno, there wasn't much time. I haven't seen him before," Morgan replied.

"Captain," Tuvok said with his eyes on the viewscreen.

Kathryn moved back into normal sitting position to look as well, just in time to see a vessel drift up through the planet's clouds. It immediately fired torpedoes toward them.

The ship barely trembled. "Shields holding," Tuvok said.

Kathryn tried to stifle a yawn so she could respond, but it beat her. She instead did a pointed hand gesture to the viewscreen. Tuvok thought he understood and tapped away at his station. Seconds later Voyager returned the favour. The first two slammed straight into the attacking ship's hull, the rest were absorbed by shields flaring up.

"I knew it. Morons," Kathryn said.

"Their torpedo launchers are down," Tuvok reported.

Harry smirked, "they're hailing."

Kathryn slouched to one side to rest on one armrest, a thoughtful expression on her face, chin resting in her palm. Chakotay watched her with bemusement as she stroked her own cheek with her thumb. After a long five minutes she straightened up, "open a channel."

As soon as the viewscreen changed the bridge crew were deafened by a very close up view of Phoebe shouting, "why are your shields up? You're supposed to be beaming down!"

Smoke hovered behind her, somebody dashed across the screen with what looked like a kettle with steam emanating from it. Phoebe sniffed the air suspiciously. Seventh Tuvok pounced on the guy before they reached a console fire, snatched the kettle and walked off screen again before Phoebe turned around to see anything.

"Oh I'm sorry, do you want a do over?" Kathryn smirked.

Phoebe growled and backed off a few steps, coughing from the smoke. She tried to smile evilly in between each one, in the end she gave up and chose to scowl instead. Typically that was when she stopped coughing. "You're here, so you've still fallen into my trap. You can't keep your shields up forever."

"Did you really think we wouldn't detect your ship parked behind that mountain? How dumb do you think we are, we're not you," Kathryn said.

"Very," Phoebe tried to sneer but her throat tickled. Her annoyance got to her first, "hey, don't assume we're all idiots because of Mrs Harry Console over there."

"I've named her Charlene," Seventh Harry proudly beamed while polishing his station.

Harry couldn't help but feel second hand embarrassment for his so called evil clone. It didn't last very long. Seven used his station to pull herself up so abruptly he jumped out of his skin.

"You're not going to get the antidote without going down there," Seventh Chakotay said. "One way or another, you'll have to drop your shields at some point."

"If they don't do it themselves. We've got you, admit it Fifth," Phoebe cackled. "You might as well surrender the crewmembers we want, it'll save us all some time."

B'Elanna ground her teeth firmly before snapping at the duo, "how the hell did you toy with our minds this time? None of us are hooked into those beds. You think for one minute..."

"Wait," Phoebe interrupted her, her face scrunched up. "What are you blabbering about?"

Kathryn rolled her eyes, "good lord, you can't even..." She shook her head and glared at her fake sister. "Does antidote trap come to your Tom sized mind?"

"I'm not even doing anything. This is uncalled for," Tom huffed.

"You mean, you're not here to cure your computers of the virus?" Seventh Chakotay timidly asked.

Harry briefly scanned his station, Tuvok did the same to his twice. "What virus?" Harry asked.

"The one in the Starfleet debris we left... Oh no matter," Phoebe's snap turned into a forced snigger. "You shall see soon enough."

Seventh Jessie wandered into view, making the real Jessie pull her face in disgust at her fluorescent red hair. She brandished a damaged circuit board at the command duo. "I found it," she said far too enthusiastically.

Both Phoebe and Seventh Chakotay facepalmed more or less in unison. Seventh Tuvok in the background looked a bit twitchy, he glanced toward the turbolift and began to edge.

Kathryn had to laugh at them, it sounded to everyone like a pitying kind. "You know, when B'Elanna suggested you were behind this, I really doubted it. It's far too, what's the word?"

"Villainous," James muttered.

Seventh Jessie giggled obnoxiously. "I can see where our James gets his *smarts* from. It's two words. Don't quit your day job, pretty boy," she said, still waving the circuit board around in Phoebe's face.

Phoebe responded to that by pushing the board into hers instead. She whined and wandered off back out of view.

Tom clenched his chair with both hands, it still didn't stop him from laughing. "Of course evil Jess crushes on you too, but at least she's upfront about it."

"Oh I'll crush something in a minute," Jessie grumbled dangerously. Tom badly laughed off a lump in his throat.

"Hang on. We can't completely discount them. What about all the sightings of evil Kes?" Harry asked.

Phoebe frowned, "who?"

Kathryn groaned and waved her hand in a dismissive manner toward the screen. Harry took that as a hint to cut them off. Chakotay approached her carefully. "So, back to square one. Nothing of worth is here," she said.

"It was a long shot anyway. Only Harry and Neelix stepped outside after we landed. It's not like anything strange happened while we were away," Chakotay said.

"Aren't we forgetting holes in floors and man eating plants?" Tom questioned.

James sighed impatiently, "it wasn't trying to eat me." He hesitated for a moment, then looked a little uneasy. "I think."

"It happened here on Voyager, whatever it is. But what?" Kathryn mumbled at the same time as she recapped everything in her head. A flash came to mind. With no context or memory of when it happened, she was left more than frustrated again.

"Considering that nobody else saw the hole, or the plant, I'd say they were just hallucinations like ours," Chakotay pointed out.

"That's not true. I saw every..." Seven piped up, but she was naturally drowned out again. This time by Opps complaining.

Harry winced as she glared at him, he shrugged apologetically. "This is strange. Someone's trying and failing to gain access to the main computer from a terminal, but I don't detect any commbadge signal anywhere near there."

"Where?" Kathryn asked.

"Thirteen," Harry scoffed like it was obvious. Everyone's attention were on him quickly.

"I told you, Taylor..." Seven quickly said before anyone stopped her again. James stared at her blankly, making her trail off anyway and glance elsewhere.

Kathryn walked straight past her without so much as looking in her general direction. She stopped in between James and Craig, then looked toward Tuvok. "Do I really need to tell you?"

"The deck's sealed off, only security can get in or out so..." Craig stuttered fearfully. He spotted Morgan looking at him, confused but with a smirk on her face. He cleared his throat and tried to sound manly, "we're on it. You can count on us."

James laughed quietly as Craig still didn't move. In the end James had to take his arm and drag him into the turbolift. Tuvok followed while judging them silently.

"What's the big deal? I never said what deck that hole was in, so," Morgan said.

Kathryn thought about it, then sighed. "I'll tell you later." The rest of what Morgan said hit her, so she swung around frantically. "The hole you saw was on Thirteen?"

"Well I was on Twelve, so yeah it lead there," Morgan said, raising her eyebrow. Her mother's eyes slowly widened, freaking her out. "Why?"

Chakotay paced over to the command chairs, staring directly at his daughter. "Because three years ago there was an explosion that caused that exact damage. Unlike our hallucinations, yours happened."

"Except for the person being there," Harry added.

"Oh, is that why it's always sealed off? I thought it was a bit funky," Morgan said with relief.

"All right, am I the only one thinking that if Morgan hallucinated an event she didn't witness, that maybe that's what we did too? Not that they didn't happen," Tom questioned. Everyone stared at him with the same bewildered expression. "What, this is news? Chakotay said that in his they didn't acknowledge him and another him called from the bridge."

Kathryn shook her head. "No, because no one else remembers either."

"Don't we? The Vidiians did attack us when we were split into two, they boarded the other. Kes disappeared through a dimensional rift, another you brought her back," Chakotay said. "Who's to say these things never happened on some level?"

Harry meekly raised his hand.

"Is it just me?" Craig whispered, stopping again to look behind him.

James sighed, "no," as he and Tuvok kept walking, leaving him a little ways behind.

Craig noticed and once more hurried to catch up with them.

"Perhaps your fear and uncertainty was due to the damage of the deck, and the mystery behind its explosion," Tuvok suggested. "Now that it's under repair..."

Cackling in the distance echoed toward them, they all froze on the spot. Craig tensed so much his shoulders were by his ears. "Nope, still creepy."

James' eyes narrowed, he walked further ahead of the pair. "Ensign," Tuvok warned him as he followed. Meanwhile the laughter continued.

"Can't be," James said, increasing speed.

"Oh god what?" Craig squeaked. He didn't want to follow either of them, but the gap between them was getting far too big for his liking. He turned around only to find himself face to stalk with the gigantic flytrap. The first detail he noticed was the gaping hole where its head should be, with only a massive leaf fluttering from its exhales. An ear piercing scream came from it as it lunged for him.

James rolled his eyes and groaned as if it were a mild inconvenience. "No," he scolded over his shoulder.

The creature dipped its leafy lack of head and squeaked pathetically.

"What the fu..." Craig stuttered, staring accusingly at James. "How did you do that?"

"We have an..." James said, pointing a side eye at the creature, "understanding. Stay."

It seemed to nod, that's how it appeared to Craig. He shuffled away a few steps so he wasn't in glomping range. Then he realised the others were continuing on as if nothing happened.

"That is not the prehensile plant from the Captain's Ready Room," Tuvok said in a hushed tone.

James glanced at his arm, picked another twig with a leaf still attached and made a point to show it to the Commander. "Yeah, sure."

"Fascinating," Tuvok said.

As soon as James went around a corner and Tuvok was nearing it, Craig relented and slowly followed them. The laughter had finally stopped, making it a tiny bit easier for him.

Tuvok readied his phaser rifle as he turned the same corner. He expected James to be halfway down the next corridor. Not only had he stopped as soon as he turned the corner, there was no corridor to speak of. Lying ahead of them, nothing but a wasteland of debris. Tuvok's left foot landed on uneven ground, it slipped to the right, twinging his ankle. He regained his footing and briefly glanced down at the scorched trail that had scarred the ground, leading all the way up to a figure standing, sneering at them both.

"You guys are really starting to slack, aren't you?" They clicked their tongue in disapproval. "Three years and still a hole."

"Damien?" Tuvok said curiously.

The man ahead of them smiled and outstretched his arms while he bowed his head. "At your destruction."

"You were pronounced dead. How is this possible?" Tuvok questioned.

Damien's smile grew into a smirk. "You underestimate my power and influence. But what else is new?"

"You overestimate our giving a crap," James said, rolling his eyes.

"Oooph, my feelings," Damien chuckled as he touched his chest delicately. "Only proving my point, meathead. Now shall..." James turned around and started to walk off, just in time for Craig to turn the corner. Damien's mood took a turn, his face hardened and his face flushed. "Hey, no use running away from me, you big pansy."

"Ensign, he is still an intruder," Tuvok said, placing an arm out to stop either of his team from leaving.

James sighed and shrugged, "fine." He turned to walk back to Tuvok's side. "What do you want, why should we care, goodbye. Done." Tuvok blocked him once more before he even moved, making him roll his eyes.

"Oh that's a good question. What do I want?" Damien said mockingly. "Begins with a R and ends with your enslavement. I suppose I have you to thank for my resurrection, so I'll let you off for your stupidity and rudeness this time."

"Renslavement?" Craig stuttered.

Damien laughed and pointed at him, "now that's cute. But you really shouldn't be bringing your mascot on dangerous missions like this, he could get his feathers clipped."

The whole comment slapped Craig in the face, it left him shaking with anger. "That's big talk for someone no one takes seriously."

"Wait, why am I getting the blame for everything? Don't you think I have enough to go around as it is?" James grumbled. Seven popped her head around the corner, eyes narrowing suspiciously. James noticed but pretended not to.

"This place is dead, the juice has been slurped up. Figured since you blew it up, you were tasked with the spring cleaning," Damien acted confused. "No matter."

Seven jumped out and arched a scowl. "I knew it!"

Craig's face twisted slightly, he turned his head a little to look at her. James elbowed him lightly and shook his head, so he kept his attention ahead.

"What do you mean by this deck is dead?" Tuvok asked.

Damien chuckled derisively. "Oh that's right, you forgot didn't you? No wonder it went kerblewy. I bet you were treating it like any other deck and..." He clapped his hands once. "Boom," he hissed mockingly.

"Forgot? We didn't," Craig stammered whilst frowning. Tuvok did as well.

Damien got a good laugh out of their reactions, until he clasped eyes on James' shoulders tensing as he looked away. "Ah, ha. Of course. Ask him, he knows what I'm talking about."

Craig and Tuvok glanced toward James. Meanwhile Seven was getting increasingly frustrated, mumbling about no one listening to her and being right.

"Ensign?" Tuvok said.

"Ignore him. He's talking about the power draining portals a few years back, you haven't forgotten anything," James said begrudgingly.

Damien shrugged and faked a pout, "anything important." He made sure to keep eye contact with James as he occasionally paced toward the team with his arms behind his back. "Am I right?" he smirked.

"Are you suggesting that another tear is responsible for the hallucinations, as well as your revival?" Tuvok asked.

"No," Damien answered with disgust. "There isn't enough sparkage in here to hotwire any of your blonde bimbo brains. Whatever sucked it all up must've been pretty powerful to begin with. Shame really."

The elderly Kes extending her arms surrounded by piercing white took Damien's place for a second. James flinched and looked around to see if anyone else saw it. Their expressions hadn't changed, he assumed they didn't, though he did hear Seven stumble back a couple of steps. "Yeah," he mouthed.

Seven shuddered, both of her arms lowered from protecting her head. "State your intentions," she said meekly.

"It seems," Damien sighed dramatically as he tapped his leg with what looked like a PADD, "that I'm stuck here with you now. It's okay, I'll make the most of it *somehow*. Perhaps there's an opening in the Captain's chair."

"Hardly. The only place you're going is the brig," Craig said.

Damien narrowed his eyes, changing his pacing direction toward him. "I don't think you get your place here, Andy." Craig's eyes flickered slightly. "You are the fodder. Useless. Comic relief, the butt monkey. I can do without, though ones with names last longer than the ones without. As for blonde number two here..."

"Andy? That was my twitter alias. So you are the same Damien from that other Earth," Craig mumbled.

His comment threw Damien completely off and it soured his mood greatly. "Who else would I be, his mum?"

"He's dead. We already made that clear," James bluntly said.

"Yes, I was there," Damien rolled his eyes. "I'll admit, I don't know how I ended up back here, in one piece either for that matter. Between Miss Stabsalot and waking up here, all I remember is a foggy couple of images. One of an old biddy making Janeway her bitch, I got a good laugh out of that one for a while."

"Old biddy?" James repeated with his eyebrow raised. The image of an older Kes instantly came to mind.

Damien's annoyed eyes rolled over to point toward him, they brightened with humour. "The other was of you, here, looking like you had walked in on Fanservice of Nine getting undressed. Pure, delicious terror and then... whoosh, all goes up in flames."

"I beg your pardon," Seven snapped.

Damien shrugged absentmindedly, "so yes, why wouldn't I think you were the one that blew this dump up? You were there, weren't you?"

Everything he had said had left James shaken. A certain memory of his replayed in his head. His team looked on, unsure why. Damien proudly smiled.

Tuvok stepped forward, rifle up as their intruder was getting a little too close. "Dead or alive, you will be taken to the brig. We can investigate this anomaly only then."

Damien snapped the PADD almost into his face, then took a few steps back so his arm was straight. "You think I came here alone and empty handed? You fool, I am Damien..."

"Master of dimensional travel?" Craig finished for him in monotone.

Damien twitched harshly. Tuvok assumed what the Lieutenant said hit a very sensitive nerve. "Better," Damien laughed in an attempt to hide it. "The new, proud owner of the USS Voyager."

"How is that better?" Seven asked.

James shook off his earlier shock to give him a bemused stare. "Did I miss something, namely everything? You're really not."

"I will be," Damien sneered, his thumb pressed against the PADD. "I took the liberty of downloading the brainwashing schematics into your database. Soon, you will all bend to my will."

"I don't think you'll find a working replicator down here. Even if you did, I would not recommend it," Tuvok said.

Damien growled and thrashed the PADD above his own head. "Mock all you want. Just you wait. I'll get my revenge."

"Really? That's a shame. This rubbish is cutting into my lunch hour," Craig snickered. Another twinge from Damien showed everyone another nerve was pinched.

"The last thing I want to do after the crap I've seen today is eat," James mumbled.

"How dare you..." Damien grumbled, pointing one of the PADD holding fingers harshly at the group. "Make light of me. You have no idea who you are dealing with."

James lazily pointed his own. "Damien," he said in a bored tone. A shadow loomed over him, screeching came from it. He instinctively ducked out of the way, allowing it to slither past the team. It gunned straight for Damien.

He turned to flee but wasn't fast enough. It pounced, aiming its head sized mouth at the hapless villain. It enveloped his face from everyone's sight, screaming all the while. He struggled for a few minutes, then it all stopped.

"Um, that was... um..." Craig mumbled fearfully.

The plant creature glided back, leaving a lifeless corpse for everyone to see. It made a lot of the witnesses queasy. James was a little unnerved that Damien's eyes were wide and pointed toward him.

"I thought you had that thing under control," Craig stuttered.

James didn't look so sure anymore, even when the creature stood in front of him waiting patiently. For a moment he was speechless. "I... maybe..."

Seven walked through the three Security officers, giving the creature a wide berth, and stopped halfway between them and Damien. Craig thought the creature would go for her too, only it recoiled and shuffled to the side. "He does," she said. "He told it to eat Damien."

"For god's sake," James groaned and clenched his fists. "What are you going to accuse me of next? Poisoning your air supply by coughing? Killing the dinosaurs?"

Craig wanted to laugh but he was far too freaked out. He turned his back on the mess, hoping that would help. "Well, she's not wrong." James looked at him with a raised eyebrow. "Not about the dinosaurs, I mean you did say eat and Damien."

"In separate sentences, yeah!" James snapped.

"And problem solved, so my work here is done. See ya," Craig stuttered so quickly no one really understood him. He dashed off before anyone could object.

Tuvok studied the plant creature carefully. "Perhaps you should find somewhere safe to keep this, lifeform. I sense some intelligence, perhaps basic..."

"Yeah right. It's Janeway's, her fault, her problem. I wouldn't even know what to do with it. The last and only plant I kept died on the first day," James huffed as he walked off as well.

"How is that even possible?" Tuvok sounded bewildered.

Seven shook her head. "And what, we're surprised by this?"

### **Sickbay:**

The Doctor closed the tricorder with a grim expression. One tap removed the scanner wrapped over Damien's biobed. "Stabbed to death and now suffocated. Don't you think this is a little excessive for somebody we kept forgetting about?"

Kathryn barely shrugged. Her arms folded tightly, a bored expression on her face. The Doctor wondered why she was even there if she didn't care.

"So, how long should we wait until he gets up and annoys us again? I need to know if I have enough time to collect one of Neelix's gross, sticky pans," Kathryn questioned.

The Doctor didn't look amused, "a man is dead. He wasn't much of a threat. Is that really necessary?"

"Doctor," Kathryn spat with cold eyes. He flinched and looked away. "I wanted to know why somebody so harmless can wake up and slip out of the morgue without anyone noticing. I already know how he died."

"Well, I don't see any of his previous wounds. If I didn't know any better, I'd say he was never stabbed," the Doctor replied.

Kathryn frowned. "What? We saw his body, we brought him here. If that never happened, how did he end up on Deck Thirteen? Is he even the same Damien, or..."

"Funny you should ask. I thought to check if his body was still in the morgue. Not only was his corpse missing, there was no trace of him being there," the Doctor said. "It was almost like the incident was erased."

"Don't," Kathryn snapped, startling the hologram. "What with Kes doing things no one remembers, an old version, and now Damien, everyone is jumping to time travel conclusions. Ridiculous."

The Doctor looked very confused. "Why? It seems reasonable. It'd explain why my earlier patients didn't remember why they were trauma..."

"It's not time travel!" Kathryn shouted at him. She quickly tried to compose herself. "It doesn't work that way. Why would we remember anything at all? We all remember Damien becoming a knife holder. It doesn't explain why my prehensile plant turned into a monster, Morgan seeing the hole on Deck Thirteen. And why Kes? She's not even here, and why would she be old? She evolved into some energy being. What rubbish. Time travel."

"Then dare I ask what you think it is?" the Doctor said, already regretting it before he finished.

Much to his relief Kathryn wasn't mad at him for asking. She actually looked relieved. "It all comes down to that deck. We scanned it earlier and found nothing wrong."

"And? That sounds like a good thing," the Doctor said.

Kathryn's eyebrow twitched, her eyes turned cold again. "We scanned it. Like any other deck," she said slowly to give him a chance to get it, or to make fun of him he thought. "It's either the calm before the storm, or whatever happened resolved whatever was wrong with it. Since I'm a half empty cup person, I'm expecting it to spit fire any second now."

"And here I thought you were a full cup person," the Doctor chuckled.

"Maybe later," Kathryn muttered. "For now, while we can, I'm getting every millimetre and particle of that deck checked out. It's the reason for this mess, I know it."

*Captain's Log Supplemental: We have returned to the Markonian space station none of the wiser to what has happened. Of course Seventh Voyager tried to tag along, poking us with a few phaser hits. Hopefully the spinning back into that planet's atmosphere will keep them occupied for a while.*

*While we're docked I've ordered a thorough scan of the whole ship. Apart from a very slight phase shift in a few bio neural gel packs, nothing so far. We're not going anywhere until a cause and fix is found. I'm not taking any chances this time.*

Kathryn pressed her lips firmly together, eyebrows both raised as high as they could go. She wasn't sure whether to scold or laugh. "So, maybe I should hear your side first?"

Harry and Tom looked on nervously, their uniforms scuffed up, their faces covered in bruises.

"Yeah um, we were wandering the station looking for, clues and trade," Tom said. Kathryn cleared her throat and widened her eyes. "A bar. A group of Kinbori invited us to play this sacred game, with these really weird gigantic rackets."

"We thought it was some kind of tennis. One minute into the game they charge for us and start attacking us with them," Harry continued.

Tom looked very uneasy, "then we thought the point was to fight back." He glanced behind him, "then it got a little out of hand."

"Really?" Kathryn's gaze fell to the PADD in her hands, she thought it best to read it aloud in as neutral tone as possible. "Eight Voyager crewmembers, including two bridge officers along with thirteen Kinbori and one Morphinian café owner, all arrested. Charges range from disorderly conduct to assault on a Security officer."

"He touched my arm," Morgan protested from behind the pair. Tom winced.

Kathryn's mask slipped into laughter. "Okay. What about the rest?"

"Well yeah, did you really think these chumps won that on their own?" Morgan scoffed. Her eyes then widened and she laughed nervously. "I mean, I was just passing by."

Harry closed his eyes and wished he was somewhere else, "oh god, I'm never gonna live down being rescued by a sixteen year old girl."

Tom gently dabbed the swollen bruise and cut next to his eye, whimpering slightly. "Speak for yourself."

"I told you to duck," Morgan giggled.

Kathryn hid her face behind her hands, still struggling over whether to laugh or groan.

B'Elanna lead a large team of very nervous engineers down the scarce corridors of Thirteen, barking orders occasionally which would send some off down another path. She was left with five when she arrived at the most damaged area. Someone had already beat her there, it put her off for a second, then she told the remainder of her team to get to work.

The first arrival turned around on hearing her. "Sorry, am I in the way?"

"Depends James, on how long you're going to stand and gawk," B'Elanna replied somewhat politely.

A half smile appeared on James' face, his shoulders still tense. "It's weird. Back then Kes warned me, that I needed to get the team patrolling here out in time. I didn't..." He hesitated. "It happened so fast. A flash of white, like one of the portals. Then darkness. It came out of nowhere."

"I'm not sure I understand, what came out of nowhere?" B'Elanna asked.

James' gaze fell to the charred ground. "The explosion." B'Elanna frowned as she looked ahead to where the end of the corridor used to be, the place she determined the explosion originated from, not

that she found the actual cause. "I can't really explain it. I just figured it was me, the shock of it you know?"

"Possibly," B'Elanna said, not sure herself. "Maybe we'll get some answers when we can finally repair it. At least most of my team didn't run back into the turbolift complaining of *the creeps*, it's progress."

"Yeah. It should be fine. I think she drained it dry," James said, turning to leave her and her team to it.

B'Elanna's frown intensified as she watched him do so. "Who did what now?"

**THE END**