

Episode 5.08

Queuing Forever

Orbiting a small green world, a tiny ship powered itself up, bringing it into sight to anybody nearby. As quickly as it appeared, it began its descent into the atmosphere. The clouds parted as it flew down towards a large city, it averted its course towards the outskirts of the city.

Following a trail of smoke lead it to a crash site, the alien ship landed carefully beside it. Doors opened as soon as it hit the ground. Twenty men and women ran out, heading straight for the neighbouring ship lying in its own debris. A commander barked orders at his comrades to surround it. One stood guard by each side of the ship's hull, on it read "NCC 74656 USS Voyager".

Two Days Earlier

Voyager and its smaller companion, the Leda, flew out of a shimmering purple nebula, both leaving behind a trail of particles behind them. Directly in their path sat a large asteroid field.

On Voyager's Bridge the acting Captain stood in front of his chair. His arms were folded in an attempt to appear intimidating. The scowl on his face and his arms only seemed to amuse his bridge staff.

"I told you not to fly into every nebula you see."

Kevin shrugged his shoulders while typing away at his station. "And we do the opposite, that's how it works."

Tom sighed, dropping his arms to his side. "That wouldn't be true if I was doing reverse psychology." He quickly picked himself back up. "Now, as Captain I should take full responsibility for what happens. However..." He pointed his finger up at the ceiling to emphasise his next point. "If you guys continue then instead of calling the repair crew to fix up everything, I'll just make whoever causes it to clean it up at least."

His finger quickly pointed at what was left of the tactical station, which was now a pile of burnt rubble. An unfortunate unknown was busy being carried off to Sickbay.

"My bad," Kevin sighed as he glanced backward. "I'll carry the guy to Sickbay instead, Jod can do the clean up."

"What!?" Jodie exclaimed. "I didn't do anything!"

"Fine god," Kevin groaned. "You can carry the guy!"

The medical staff continued on their way towards the turbolift. The door opened before they got there, James and Jessie immediately spotted them and hurried out of it. Jessie took one look at her station before sighing in annoyance. She headed to her old Engineering station.

"I know the drill. So glad I was late this morning."

"You really should think of getting a new job," James muttered, eyeing the rubble in distaste. "What happened this time?"

"Kevin decided to take us on a trip to the pretty volatile nebula," Tom grumbled, dropping into his seat.

Jessie typed in a few things on her old station, then took a seat. "Tactical's moved."

"Kevin," Tom groaned.

"What? I didn't know how to do that," Kevin muttered angrily, shaking his head.

Tom was rethinking his answer to becoming Voyager's commander for the twentieth time that week. "I didn't say anything about transferring stations or repairing, just clean up the mess!" His face was now very red from all the snapping and shouting. "Honestly Slayers are just about the muscle, invisible muscle. Instead of a brain they get that empty space in the skull filled with Popeye juice."

Jodie giggled to herself, "silly boy, he eats spinach not juice."

James cleared his throat as he stood over the stressed ex-helmsman, just behind the chairs. Tom briefly looked up at him. "I stand by it. It's not like you to disagree with an insult about you unless it has the word gay or something meaning that."

"Generally no, but if it's you that's saying it," James said, casually slouching his shoulders.

"What else is new," Tom sighed to himself. He breathed in deeply and then out to calm himself. "Why are you still here anyway? All you do is smooch the missus, that sends you on your way."

Jessie raised an eyebrow as she looked over to him, then Jodie. She was in the middle of looking sorry for herself. "My guy doesn't walk me to work."

James had a brief glance around the bridge, his eyebrow raised. "What's the armoury doing on the Bridge?"

Tom groaned into his hand for the twentieth time that day. "Don't ask..." was all he managed to say before the entire room burst into a huge argument.

Jessie's eyes widened slightly, they then spotted a pile of weapons sitting nearby the Conference Room.

"Lookie here, I'll say this in a way in you'll understand!" Kevin snapped at everyone. "I'm the hot guy, I get the big ass sword!" His finger pointed at the pile of weapons, one of them being an unusually large sword. James looked over again.

"That's my big ass sword," he grumbled, marching over to the pile and reclaiming his lost weapon. Jessie tried to hide a giggle behind her hand.

"Oh come on!" Kevin protested, marching over himself. "This is brunette-ist."

"Er... what?" as expected was James' response, as well the rest of the bridge.

"It's always the blondes who get the bloody best weapon," Kevin grunted, he knelt down to have a peep at the remaining weapons.

Everyone repeated themselves, "what?"

Kevin jumped to his feet holding a sword half the size as the other one. "Is this a joke?"

"It's not about the size of the weapon you know, now just bloody pick one!" Tom snapped from his chair. "God, James' hair colour has nothing to do with the god damn weapon."

"Wow, five years of no episodes have gone to his head," Jodie sighed.

Tom groaned into his palm while James looked over, with a confused look still on his face. "He was told that he could only bring one weapon, the rest of his team saw them and... No I don't know why he dumped them here."

James' stare went to Kevin instead, he smiled smugly. "Security, part time baby."

"Who approved that?" James asked around the room.

Tom coughed into his hand nervously. "Well I think it's time for my coffee break." He rushed into his office.

"So being the Security Chief, I still have no say on who annoys me. Fine. I think the Leda could do with a few more hands," James muttered.

Jessie shrugged, "you mean swords."

Kevin shrugged casually, "there were other weapons too, the swordsmen always get the ladies though." He winked in Jodie's direction, she just rolled her eyes.

"Ok enough of this crap," James groaned.

"Oh sorry," Kevin said. He gave Jessie a wink as well. "There, better?" he asked in James' direction.

"Yeah, much. Damien or Chakotay duty?" James responded.

Kevin's face fell. "Hmm, Chak... no Damien. He's been seen with Ylara a lot lately, she's so much hotter than..." James interrupted him by grabbing his arm and pushing him into the turbolift. "Hey hey, what? It's not like I said it was your sister that was the hottest." James shook his head and pressed the button to close the door. "Hey what about my bad ass weapon!?"

"No problem," James said as he grabbed one weapon. The door opened again and he chucked it at him.

Kevin looked at the tiny knife in his hands, he was about to complain but the door closed in his face.

"He could have been saying she's hotter than Chakotay, but hey," Jodie commented.

"Why the sudden obsession with weapons and Security?" Jessie asked anyone who may know.

"He's been like this since he started using his new training program," Jodie explained. "Think he said it was called Fifth Fantasy, or Fantasy Seven... hopefully not the second one." Most of the room shuddered.

"Oookay then, I'll just er... *smooch the missus and go.*" He went over to Jessie. Everyone groaned and looked away.

Tom peeped his head out of the Ready Room door. "Hey guys, I'm trying to do a log here. What's the date again?"

Everyone stared at each other with a worried look on their faces.

Lieutenant Commander Paris's Log Supplemental. Well it's now 2012 and we've still not budged an inch passed episode seven...

"What! Final Fantasy Seven? I'm coming ladies!"

God damn it Kevin, get some help!! So anyway that stupid log in episode three clearly had no idea how bad the series would get after that. Getting back to the topic at hand. As usual Voyager's in need of repairs after our last mission, so right now we're taking a visit to this huge asteroid field to mine for supplies. I'd love to know who keeps nicking them all.

Voyager's Conference Room:

Most of the main cast and several others were sitting around the desk. Kevin was fidgeting, rubbing the white patch on his arm. It had a logo printed on it. Almost everyone else looked very bored.

Tom was in charge of the meeting, Chakotay sat beside him glaring in the direction of the window. "Ok so we can mine for dilithium?"

"Yeah, but there's not much. Looks like someone's been here already," Harry replied. He got out of his seat and went to the side panel. A map of the asteroid field appeared on it, only a few of the rocks had a mark next to them. "There's also signs of plant life, but nothing's edible."

"Of course, there's no oxygen," Craig muttered, frowning slightly. "How come it's there in the first place?"

Harry shrugged his shoulders, "your guess is as good as mine. It looks like it all died recently. There's also other biological residue left, the ships scanners can't determine it from here. If we really want to investigate we'd need to risk a shuttle."

"It'll help us how?" Chakotay asked, finally turning to the rest of the senior staff.

Harry frowned, staring nervously at his feet, "it won't sir."

"Then what else have we got?" Chakotay asked.

"There's quite a lot of metal in the vicinity, some of it imbedded into the asteroids themselves," Harry replied.

B'Elanna eyed the station as she walked over to stand near him. "Some of it's just floating in space, it's debris."

"Oh my god," Tom stuttered.

"Um, I don't get it," Kevin fidgeted.

B'Elanna groaned, "why is he here? He's obviously not here just to look pretty. He's not a main character either."

"Oh come on, I'm not from your time so stop picking on me. We didn't have holodecks, or whatever you're talking about," Kevin grumbled. "Oh, I need a flower girl."

Harry pulled a face, "a what?"

"Ok Kevin you're banned from the episode!" Tom snapped. "Get cured and you can come back. Oh and no Holodeck."

"God, you're mean. You can't stop me anyway," Kevin grumbled, he stormed out. Everyone sighed in relief.

Ylara sighed, "so, what does this debris mean?"

"It looks like a ship's been here already and was destroyed," Harry replied. "It would explain the plant life, they probably had crops aboard."

"Oh sure, be nice to her!" Kevin's voice yelled from outside. Tom cleared his throat impatiently. "FINE!"

James stood up too, frowning at the side panel. "That can't be it though, some of the plant life looks like it's a part of the asteroids."

"Ookay one mystery is still open, but the evidence clearly shows a ship was here before, maybe more than one," Harry said. "It would explain why the dilithium is partially mined already."

"How long would it take to mine it?" Tom questioned. "I want to get out of here as soon as possible."

Harry shook his head, he turned to B'Elanna. "Normally two days, but with our records with shuttles and disasters, probably a week."

"Leaving time for whoever destroyed those ships to come back for us," Chakotay muttered. "Harry collect a sample of the debris, find out what destroyed them."

Harry looked worried, "um I'm not the... I'm a commander now." Chakotay just stared coldly at him. "Ok yes sir," he squeaked.

"Is there anything else?" Tom questioned.

Jessie shuddered slightly, "well Annika told me there's a trading station nearby, and then she decided to put herself into a coma."

"What did she say?" James asked, smirking slightly.

She looked at him innocently, "I told you." Her hand subconsciously went to her hair to check if it was ok. "She said I should have my hair like hers."

"Something's never change then," Tom commented.

"You should totally tie your hair up in a pink ribbon," Kevin commented, passing her a wink.

"Kevin, what did I tell you!" Tom yelled at him.

"Should I wear a figure hugging pink dress too?" Jessie groaned.

"Oh hell yeah," Kevin drooled, he then noticed James just staring at him. "Ok sorry, I was just doing you a favour. Speaking of which, you've had that hairstyle for years."

Chakotay got out of his chair, then marched over to him. Even Kevin knew better and backed away.

"Ok I'm gone, but I say if James wanted to go back to blonde, he should have at least spiked it or something." He ran out before damage could be done to him.

"Oh god, comprehensive school flashback," James shuddered. Jessie giggled to herself. "I only dyed it back because Nikki's new thing is brown haired guys. She was the reason I changed it in the first place."

Tom looked disappointed, "oh I thought you meant that at school you had spikes."

James' eyes shifted nervously, "no erm, trading station?"

"Yes please," B'Elanna groaned.

"It's only an hour away at warp two, apparently. We can trade for food supplies, and maybe snoop for info instead of staying here and risking dying for it," Jessie commented.

"I'm all for it," Harry grinned. Chakotay rolled his eyes and muttered something rude under his breath.

"Why is he even invited to these things?" James questioned. Everyone shrugged.

"Because we'd better off having a porcupine in charge than Tom Paris," Chakotay replied. Tom was about to say something. "I'm not saying I'm one."

"Oh please, my jokes are so much better than..." Tom said. He was interrupted by his commbadge chirping. "Oh brother here it is, Paris here. What is it?"

"An alien ship is demanding to talk to someone in charge, they're quite annoyed."

Everyone headed for the bridge. Jessie stopped James before they got to the door, "weren't you supposed to pick up Amy?"

"That's going into child abuse territory Jess," he muttered.

"True," Jessie shrugged, they both followed everyone else out.

Tom turned to the temporary Tactical crewmember, just as Jessie went over to take over. "Damage?"

"They haven't attacked us," the previous tactical girl said, before she moved away.

"That's a first. Put them on screen," Tom said to Jodie.

She huffed slightly, "fine, but next time there's a meeting I want to be invited." Everyone stared blankly at her. "What, it's just principle." She keyed in the commands, "on screen."

Tom turned back to look at the viewscreen, an angry alien with the usual facial bumps on their heads was frowning impatiently. "This is Tom Paris of the Starship Voyager, erm, what's up?"

"Well for one thing your blonde girl spent the last ten minutes laughing at me," he muttered.

Jodie smiled, "well you did ask to talk to a Captain."

"Hilarious," Tom rolled his eyes. "Forgive her, or not. What can we do for you?"

"We need help, our home planet is in trouble. It's dying," the alien replied.

"Funnily enough, we don't know how to treat cancer in planets," Chakotay bluntly said.

Tom sighed, cringing slightly. "No wonder Janeway drank coffee." He looked up, avoiding Chakotay's very cold stare. "How could we possibly help?"

"We are a part of the Uhrenian Resistance Movement, we are trying to stop the problem from the source," the alien replied. "Our numbers are of the minority, we can't take care of it alone."

"What is the source?" Tom asked.

Chakotay butted in, he stood directly in front of him. "I'm sorry but our people are not allowed to interfere so greatly with other alien worlds. Tom here doesn't seem to grasp that, we lost several people only yesterday to a similar blunder."

Tom huffed, "I wasn't accepting to help, I was just..."

The alien snorted in disgust, "so you'd just let a planet full of billions of people die, just like that. Your people are very heartless."

James walked over to the command centre, roughly pushing Chakotay to the side. "Don't listen to him, this is a guy who digs up his dead wife and tries to get her assimilated to bring her back. What did you mean by the source?"

The alien was beyond horrified, "that's awful. Erm, yes the source. A new government came to power only six months ago, they've replaced the current power plants with new ones. They're very dangerous, they need to be destroyed."

Chakotay shook his head, "right, we had nuclear power plants on our homeworld long ago. If some git just decided they wanted to *destroy the problem at the source* it would have killed everyone."

"There's no other way, if we don't destroy these plants, our world will wither and die," the alien said. "They're draining the life from the planet itself to power their own selfish needs."

Kevin walked in and opened his mouth, everyone turned around and yelled, "no Kevin!"

"Aaaw man," he whined as went back to the turbolift.

"How many people will die in this attempt to save the world, I don't think so," Chakotay muttered.

"Please, there's no other way. We need more people to infiltrate the fac..." the alien pleaded.

Tom sighed, "Chuckles is right. You're risking lives to save them, there are better ways. We can't get involved in stuff like this. If we can help with your planet any other way, we will."

The alien was now beyond furious, his face was bright red, "we won't forget this!" The viewscreen changed views to show the alien ship fly away.

"Ookay, who's replacing Kevin at the helm?" Tom nervously asked.

The non bridge crewmembers left via the turbolift near opps, he sighed feeling defeated. "Fine, it's not like you forget how." He sat down in his old chair, "setting a course for that trading station."

The Leda's Security Office:

Craig sat comfortably at his desk, feet draped over it and his chair reclined far back. His thoughts were elsewhere so he failed to notice the doors open, and Li'Chin lead all the Slayer trainees inside.

"Mr Anderson," his shrill voice broke his thoughts. "Ah you're awake."

"No," Craig muttered.

"No? You do not know what I was going to ask," Li'Chin said impatiently for once.

"Yeah but why waste your breath," Craig said.

The annoyed watcher clicked his heels, folded his arms in an attempt to appear menacing. Of course it had the opposite effect, leaving most of the trainees in stitches. "What? What!?"

Craig sighed as he reluctantly removed his legs from the desk. "James told me about the survival course, and my answer is as usual *bugger off*."

"Yes well, Mr Stuart decided to go trading on the station, I do need someone to take over training for today," Li'Chin said.

"I'll tell you what. I'll record my answer, then leave it to be triggered whenever anyone walks in and speaks. It'll save me a lot of grief," Craig muttered, getting to his feet.

Li'Chin smiled, clearly not getting it. "What is your answer?"

"It begins with B and O," Craig replied, staring blankly. "What could I teach them anyway?"

"Just teach them about your experiences, I'm sure you have a lot. Keep them company, bye!" Li'Chin scampered off.

"Oh he always does that," Stewart smiled nervously.

"Ok great..." Craig did a fake smile like it hurt him. "Bugger off." The trainees just stared at him, only Jach looked a bit nervous. "Fine, sit and be quiet. I'm swamped right now."

"Swamped with what, you looked like you were practising your brooding skills," Onlan said.

Shar huffed, "we got enough of that when Kevin took over yesterday."

"Kevin, brooding. What's next? Chakotay becoming a psycho, oh wait," Craig muttered like he didn't care.

"He was just practising," Onlan said. "For his holodeck program."

"He does realise that program reacts to him the same regardless of how he acts, the game is like 400 years old," Craig grumbled, shaking his head. "He can continuously grope the pink girl, steal the magic off the other girl, and deflate the big girl's Annika assets, and they'd still all fan over him like Neelix is with Leola Root."

Onlan smiled, "sounds like my kind of program."

Craig rolled his eyes, "let me save you the trouble. The girlfriend dies, big girl's a whiny jealous liar, and the other mugs you."

"Wow, if the girlfriend dies it sounds like a program you should try out," Shar muttered.

Craig narrowed his eyes in her direction, "what?"

"Well then you'd have a good reason to be a mopey loser," Shar simply said. The other trainees quickly moved away from her.

"So a survival course? If James is taking you, he's finally taking you to get killed. It's about time," Craig said, sitting back down in his chair. "I will go after all, get a good seat."

"Hey um, let's hear about some of those experiences then," Leesa cheerfully butted in. She rushed over to rejoin Binene at his side, hooking onto his arm just for a moment. He blushed a little. "It should be fun."

Craig sighed, he shut his eyes to try to shut everything about the trainees out.

Meanwhile things were pretty hectic on the alien trading station. There were so many people the Voyager visitors felt like it was Christmas again for these people.

The Stuart's had made the mistake of bringing their kids with them. Amy looked very afraid of the crowds, and clung to her dad's neck as he carried her around. Duncan kept trying to lead him into every weapon shop he saw, which were strangely common in the side of the station they were at. Sasha held her mother's hand obediently for the moment, but every time a toy shop appeared she tried to pull her towards it. The busy crowds were making it harder for the eldest children to drag their parents somewhere they wanted.

"This wasn't such a good idea," Jessie mumbled, she felt a tug on her arm. Sasha stared up at her, the green in her eyes sparkling.

"Mummy, pretty dolls in the window!" Her other hand pointed at one of the shops.

"No, but it was face painting in the nursery. Which would you prefer?" James said.

"Yeah but if we're going to shop for weapons, bringing the kids is not a must," Jessie sighed.

James shrugged, "I just don't trust leaving them on the ship when we're both away." His eyes spotted a shop with mixed weapons in. "If you want I'll just take Duncan, you girls can look elsewhere."

"Oh, sexist are we?" Jessie playfully scolded. "I don't trust Duncan in a weapon shop."

"Hey, I'm totally trustworthy, weapons bad," Duncan said, folding his spare arm across his chest.

"Uh huh," Jessie muttered.

"I'll keep a hold of him, it'll be ok," James said with a smile.

"Hmm, if you say so. But you in a weapon shop well it's like me in a clothes shop," Jessie mumbled.

James tried not to laugh as he handed Amy over to her, "oh you caught me. Do you want to come in after all and see which sword would go better with these pants?"

His wife's eyes narrowed slightly, "haha, you're funny, not." He began to walk away, well Duncan mostly pulled him away. "Hey go for that long sleek grey one in the window!"

James looked back at her briefly, smirking away.

"Mummy!" Sasha moaned, tugging at her mother's hand again. "Dolly's. Duncan gets to see what he wants."

Jessie sighed, "at least wait until they come back." She ignored her daughter huffing about it. Her eyes rested on the shop next to the one James and Duncan went inside. "Holy crap." her eyes widened when she saw what they were selling in the window. Inside she could see a familiar figure leaving the till.

"Oh no no," she groaned. Nervously she headed over to him as he was just leaving the shop. An evil smile was spread across his face while he leered at his purchase. "Damien!" he jumped slightly, almost dropping it.

"Why must you always foil my pla... I mean, what are you doing here?" Damien asked, hiding the basket he was holding behind him.

"You do realise that the rabbits invasion was already attempted like, six seven years ago and failed, badly?" Jessie muttered.

Damien smiled deviously, "oh yes, you're afraid of rabbits aren't you?"

"No, that's dumb," Jessie muttered.

The ex villain started to bring out the basket from behind his back, Jessie responded with a nasty slap across the face. Damien glared a little when Amy giggled at this.

"Hmph, I'll have you know these were my most loyal servants," Damien said.

"Uh huh, they attacked you," Jessie smiled.

"Yes but they weren't annoying," Damien muttered. "Speaking of which, why are you still here?"

"Witty," Jessie sarcastically groaned.

A deafening rumbling sound could be heard from just around the corner. The station began shaking violently, forcing a lot of people onto the floor.

James rushed out of the weapons shop, holding a freaked Duncan this time. "Is everyone ok?"

"Yes my cutesy rabbit is fine," Damien cooed inside the basket, as he sat on the floor.

James stared blankly at him, then shook it off. "Jess?"

Both of their terrified daughters were clinging onto their mum. Jessie kept a tight hold of both of them, "I think so. We should go."

"Best idea of the day," James muttered. He was about to tap his commbadge when the group were ambushed by alien Security holding rifles.

"Hold it, you're not going anywhere!"

Damien clutched his rabbit like creature protectively, "you're not taking my Snugglebumps, take these losers instead!"

Duncan laughed, "snuggle what?"

James sighed, "great finally, take him and do something about the rabbit while you're at it."

"Yes please," Jessie said, eyeing Snugglebumps.

The Security ignored Damien, probably on purpose to avoid losing any sanity. "No, you people were talking to the terrorists before you came here. You're under arrest for the bombing."

"Oh for god's..." James groaned. "We've got kids with us, do you really think we'd plant a bomb?"

"We've seen it before, using the kids as a cutesy alibi," one man said.

"Tut, you two are just awful. So evil, I'd never do anything like that. You people disgust me," Damien rambled as he got to his feet. "I'll be on my way." One Security guy grabbed him. "Oh you shouldn't have done that." With his spare arm he opened the cage, "go Snugglebumps!" The rabbit did nothing.

"Yeah, do you guys have a mental hospital here?" Jessie asked. She jumped a little as she felt something rub against her leg, looking down she noticed it was just Sasha holding on to her.

Another Security guy ran over, "sir, we just spotted suspicious characters around the power plant, a team is already after them." He ran back the way he came.

"We'll contact your ship later. If we find any evidence that you were involved we'll arrest the three of you," one guy said.

"We should anyway, when they're on their ship their Captain will protect them," the leader said, reaching for his phaser like weapon again. He soon found the big sword from the bridge pointed at his face. "Fine, we'll be in touch." They all headed away.

"Probably not the best idea if he thinks we're guilty," Jessie mumbled, still looking very paranoid about the rabbit.

James lowered the sword, then returned it to the sheath on his back. "It worked for now, didn't it? Let's get back to the ship." He tapped his commbadge, "Voyager get us out of here, maybe beam Damien into space while you're at it."

"I'd love to but he's holding a smaller lifeform."

"Oh that too," Jessie quickly said.

Sasha was staring at Snugglebumps, "it's cute. Why are you afraid of it mummy?"

"Cute, so the deception has worked, excellent," Damien sneered while he closed the box. "Soon you'll be taking those words back." He found a different sword pointing at his neck, this time it was Jessie holding it. This one was a lot thinner, but just as long and deadly.

"If that THING comes near her, I'll perform one of my Evil Witch tricks. Understand?" she snapped.

"Ok ok, yeesh," Damien grumbled.

"Um, ookay, energising."

Voyager:

The Stuart family, Damien and Snugglebumps rematerialised on the transporter pad. Jessie was still pointing the sword at Damien.

"Whatever happened to the no weapons lock on these things," the transporter guy wondered, staring at his console.

"They don't detect swords. Jess..." James replied.

"Fine," Jessie sighed, lowering the sword. Damien ran out so fast he was like a blur.

"That was sooo cool, where's my sword?" Duncan asked.

"No Duncan!" both parents snapped at him.

He pouted, angrily folding his arms. "You're mean."

Very early the next morning**The Bridge:**

Tom was busy trying to reason with the angry Security manager on the viewscreen, while Chakotay watched eating popcorn from his old seat. Tom was obviously getting rather stressed, which didn't help the convincing matter.

"I'm telling you, they did confront us but we turned them down."

"How can we know for sure? It's one hell of a coincidence that you show up just a short while after talking to them, then a power plant is destroyed. I did mention the many crewmembers you had aboard, didn't I?" the alien grumbled.

Tom was sweating bucketloads by this time. "How on earth can we prove it to you?"

"Well if you're innocent then you have nothing to hide, just full co-operation with the investigation," the alien replied.

"That we can do," Tom said, looking a little relieved.

"Good, remain docked. Our scientists and detectives will board to examine your ship. If we find any materials on your ship that match the explosion, then we will be forced to arrest everyone who boarded the station."

"Even the kids?" Tom said meekly.

"Of course not. We'll keep in touch Voyager," the alien said. The viewscreen switched off.

"That was almost as good as a movie," Chakotay smiled, stuffing his face with another handful of popcorn.

Tom turned around, his hands went to his hips. "A little help would have been nice."

"Yeah I didn't really care, we could have lost Damien, James. Sounded good to me," Chakotay mumbled with his mouth full.

"Damien was there!?" Tom groaned. "I told him he couldn't go, how does he do it?"

"No matter. Sensors showed that the explosion was caused by a rather primitive bomb," Harry's voice said over the comm. "We have none of the materials aboard the ship, we had something similar centuries ago but it's not used anymore."

"Great. How are those carpets coming Harry?" Chakotay asked with a smile.

"I thought you were joking. I'm in charge now, you can't do this to me anymore!"

"Harry," Chakotay scolded.

"Fine, I'll get started. Leda out."

The turbolift doors opened, James stepped out looking a little distracted. Chakotay looked back briefly, "speak of the Osama."

Tom shook his head, then wiped his brow. "Don't tell me it's 0800 already."

"Huh? Oh, no," James mumbled. He frowned, "Osama?"

"Oh it's nothing. The owners of the space station are blaming us for the boom yesterday afternoon. You were the nearest, so..." Tom explained with a sigh.

"Well if it was an explosion of rabbits then we could have blamed Damien," James commented.

Meanwhile:

Jessie bolted upright in her bed, her face and hair drenched in sweat. "Oh thank god. Just a dream." She checked under her bed covers just in case. With a heavy sigh she went back to lie down, but then noticed she was alone. With a shudder Jessie lay back down and tried to get the nightmare out of her head.

Back on the Bridge:

"I'm sure your wife would have loved that," Tom commented.

"Yeah well, it's better than a stab in the back I suppose," James said.

Chakotay groaned, "ugh I hope I'm not getting the blame for that."

Tom and James turned their heads to give him a *what the hell* look. "Anyway, if it isn't 0800, why are you here?" Tom asked.

"We'll need to have a meeting this morning," James replied, still giving Chakotay a frown. He rolled his eyes and turned away. "It's urgent."

"Is it more urgent than..." Tom sighed. James nodded. "Ugh, I think I might just book the Holodeck for a week."

"You remember what I told you yesterday?" James asked him.

Tom cringed, "yeah, you're not changing my mind."

"Maybe after the meeting," James commented.

Tom sighed, he rose from his chair. "Fine. Do I have time to start packing first?"

"Oh for god's sake, I'll do it for you," Chakotay grumbled when he finished his popcorn. He crumpled up the packaging, just to throw it at the back of Tom's head. "You and James have a great time, I'll just get the bomb ready."

"Yes we get it, you're a little crabby 'cos my mum's not around to change you anymore. It's not cool, it's not badass, or intimidating. Everyone's done it by now, it's gotten stale. In fact I remember Neelix trying to act like the baddest thing to walk through the ship when somebody killed his Leola Root plant. You're just embarrassing yourself now, so stop it and get yourself some original character development," James ranted.

Tom looked uncomfortable, while Chakotay looked ready to explode any second.

"Um, yeah. Who do you think you are? Ooooh, scary guy," Tom lamely decided to add on. Everyone turned to stare at him. "You know, cos I'm so scared and stuff."

"No, that's embarrassing," Chakotay muttered.

"It was the same thing as what he said, only simplified," Tom complained.

"Sorry Tom, next time I'll try to speak in moron for you," James said, shaking his head. Chakotay opened his mouth, but James interrupted before he could say anything. "Haha, I speak moron cos I am one. You're so quick, Chuckles."

Chakotay stared blankly without blinking for a few seconds. He stood up. "You know what Drunken Mistake, fu..."

"Woah!" Tom butted in quickly. "We don't have a censoring system anymore, no F bombs." He turned to James. "Why don't we talk about this in my Ready Room."

"It kinda loses its effect if he's not in the room," James replied.

Tom covered his face with both of his hands. "No, no..."

"I know, chill," James said with a smirk. He headed towards the Ready Room.

Tom sighed heavily before following him. Once they were both gone everybody turned to look at Chakotay.

"What!" he snapped, making them all burst into giggles. "Ugh, I need a drink."

Most of the Senior Staff for both ships were assembled in the Conference Room on Voyager. These were Tom, Harry, James, B'Elanna, Jessie, Doctor Jones and Chakotay. Luckily for everyone else's sanity James and Chakotay were standing as far away from each other as possible. Craig, Kevin and Zare had also joined everyone for the meeting.

"We're all here because we have a serious problem on our hands. Despite all our efforts to keep paranormal activity away from the fleet, we're going to..." Tom started to speechify. Luckily Chakotay butted in.

"You have to do more than make speeches to be a good Captain, Tom." He shook his head as he moved to stand at the head of the table. "Voyager has been run by the clown and his freak for long enough. I don't know what Starfleet were thinking but it's time for action now."

"Last time I checked there wasn't any Tolg ships around," James muttered.

Chakotay quickly composed himself and continued. "The last time whiny boy here had such a big vision, an entire city was destroyed and we nearly lost Earth to the Softmicron."

"I'll prepare one of the shuttles for launch," James said as he pretended to leave. A lot of the staff sniggered quietly to themselves, some tried not to just in case.

"You all think this is funny do you?" Chakotay grunted as he stared at each and every person in the room.

James stopped just in front of the door he was heading for earlier, then turned to face him. "I don't, I was just stating the appropriate facts for everyone. Now, should I tell Damien to meet you in the Shuttle Bay or do you want to meet in the morgue to pick out a body together?"

Some of the staff were pretty confused at this point. Chakotay didn't look very amused, unlike Craig who for once did.

"I thought you said no speeches anyway," Tom meekly said.

"Fine. As we don't know when this'll happen besides soon, we need a plan to thwart the demons attack that suits," Chakotay said. "What do we know?" Most of the staff didn't respond, they didn't have anything.

"All I saw was lots of demons on the bridge, coming out of nowhere. Jessie said something about 80% before she... well," James said.

"Oooh, you'd better watch your back, Jess," Kevin smirked.

Jessie rolled her eyes, groaning slightly. "Yes I get it. I get stabbed in the back, again! It's not funny, Kev."

"What really, in the back?" Kevin's eyes widened. "I was only joking. I turned off that program for weeks trying to hack it so I could bring her back. She was hot and I didn't even get a kiss. Though does CPR count?"

Tom climbed to his feet, staring blankly at the strange Slayer. "Enough! I don't want to hear another word about Final Fricking Fantasy, Kevin you're supposed to be banned from the holodeck." Kevin shrugged.

"Um, what about 80%?" B'Elanna questioned quickly, hopefully to change the subject.

"I don't know, I only heard her yell *80% so far*," James replied.

Jessie looked a little uncomfortable, "the part that got me was why Duncan was there too."

"Everyone also had melee weapons already, which is odd," James said.

Chakotay growled quietly. "Isn't it obvious? Now that we know about this we're going to be arming the crew."

"We are? Hot damn, I'll get myself a big sword," Kevin grinned, he turned to leave but Zare stopped him by grabbing his arm.

"Is that wise?" B'Elanna questioned. She looked at Kevin briefly, "on both accounts. Not everyone can fight that way, Starfleet don't train people to fence or swing axes, knives. Hand to hand maybe, but not everyone."

"Nobody in Starfleet is really ready to fight many demons," Harry commented.

"Well, why don't we train them?" Chakotay suggested, smirking slightly.

James groaned, "oh great."

Kevin perked up slightly, "actually that's not a bad idea. We'd obviously need more trainers though."

"Well surely you meathead Slayers can take care of that. There's four of you, one already training some idiots. Plus there's three shift schedules to divide up everyone," Chakotay said.

Tom leaned on the back of the chair he was standing behind. "Ok hang on..."

B'Elanna eased into the nearby chair, looking thoughtful. "Why don't we make it simple? Holodeck training session every day, no matter what shift you're on. Experienced people in one group, newbies interested in fighting in another, and one for people who don't really fight..."

"What exactly would the last ones do?" Harry questioned.

"Probably self defence only, how to operate stations while avoiding attacks, the best way to get away," James replied. "It could work."

"Hang on though. Kevin, Ylara and me are supposed to train everyone, which'll probably mean extra work. Yet James does his usual thing," Zare said, folding her arms. "I assume those three groups are for us."

Kevin clicked his fingers, "score, Holodeck training."

"No," Tom groaned. "In past experience, we can safely assume these attacks will happen very soon. The simplest and quickest way is to tell everyone they need to report to the Holodeck, for Defence Training. We can't expect any of us normal folk to have an epic battle with a demon, right? We need survival tactics, like James mentioned. Daily."

"We need better than that, what if everyone on board shows up?" Harry asked.

"Well it'd be a first. It's not like this crew line up to get hurt and/or killed, at least voluntarily anyway," Tom commented.

"Great. My two biggest pains in my ass can work on the schedules," Chakotay said. Mostly everyone stared cluelessly at him. "My stepprat, and the idiot who thought he had a chance with my daughter."

Craig groaned and rolled his eyes. "Well I'd better do what the guy who's best friend is Damien says."

Tom pulled a little bag out of nowhere and started pulling hyposprays out of it. B'Elanna slapped the hand responsible, he pouted in her direction. "But I need them!"

"No, what did I tell you. No stress drugs!" she snapped.

"It keeps me calm," Tom whimpered. He looked up at Craig then James who, along with everyone else, were staring at him in amusement.

"Wait, what about the children during this attack?" Doctor Jones said in a worried tone. "We can't expect them to turn up to Defence Training."

"Not inviting them to the bridge is one idea," Jessie replied.

James sighed, briefly looking at Tom who looked like he was struggling to breathe. "That's ok. They'll be safe on the Leda."

"You know this, how?" Chakotay asked in a bored tone.

"Miss Ylara has been having visions as well," Doctor Jones chimed in. "She did say that during one, people were evacuating to it."

"Nice of her to tell us," Harry muttered.

Chakotay snorted, "what do you expect of the little brat?"

James glanced at him, "hissy fits, throwing toys out of the pram, digging up people's graves. The usual." A few people sniggered to themselves.

Chakotay didn't respond, he got up and stormed out of the room. Everyone else relaxed a little.

Tom's sigh in relief was loud enough to be heard outside. "Ok, so is it agreed? Everyone gets some training from the Slayers, daily. Now we just need to discuss what to do when this attack happens."

"Panic?" Harry commented.

"No, well yes, but something more detailed than that. Harry, as your ship will be demon free..." Tom said.

"Actually, about that," Jessie piped up. Tom looked over at her. "I have a really bad idea about it."

Harry squirmed in his seat, "oh dear."

The Security Office:

A shadow cast over the desk. James only looked up with his eyes, he quickly rolled them before sitting back in the chair. "What?"

Li'Chin adjusted his glasses then put them back on. "I was probably the last to hear about this upcoming demon attack, anyhow it means we'll have to put forward the survival courses."

"What survival courses?" James muttered as his eyes went back to the computer.

"I told you twice already. Simply put, the trainees are taken to a remote barren planet. With their teacher of course. They're left for two days and are taught to survive," Li'Chin replied.

"Great, have a nice trip," James said.

Li'Chin backed off a few steps just so he was out of arms reach. "I'm not the teacher for this."

"Hell no," James snapped. "I'm busy, plus I can't just leave Jess with the kids."

"Why not? Rumour has it she left you to look after them numerous times," Li'Chin said.

"Not for two days straight. She'd never agree to this," James said.

Li'Chin seemed puzzled, "so? Your wife isn't the boss of you, is she?"

"A lot of guys would say no to that, but their wife isn't Jessie," James replied.

Tom chirped in from the doorway, "or B'Elanna." He stepped forward to allow the door to close. "Usually if she doesn't get her own way, it's either a slap, punch, no touching and/or no Holodeck. Whenever Miral's around I'm guaranteed a kick or punch."

James smirked at him, "no touching?"

Tom just blinked, "oh you're kidding. Don't tell me B'Elanna's the only one who punishes like that. God, the humanity!" He collapsed stropily into the chair opposite James.

"Well Jess has threatened that, it's the only reason her newly found brother is unharmed," he said.

Tom scoffed, "ugh, I replicate her the wrong meal accidentally, she'll ban me for two weeks. One time I wasn't even allowed in the bedroom."

"This is really interesting and all, but I think we need to get back to the trainee issue," Li'Chin sighed.

"I thought we were done, I'm not going. Besides it's pointless, they might not even survive this demon slaughter to get trapped on a planet for real," James said.

Tom put up his hand with a clueless expression on his face. "Question?"

"It's in case trainees lose a game and they're trapped on a planet," Li'Chin explained for him.

"But you're trapping them on a barren planet, that would never happen," James said.

Li'Chin blinked a few times, for once speechless. "Well."

"They could get transport from their Game drop off, and it could crash on a baron one," Tom suggested.

Li'Chin clapped his hands loudly, startling Tom. "Yes! I mean, yes exactly."

James rolled his eyes. "It doesn't matter anyway. You could teach them that. I don't know survival stuff."

"Yes he's an expert on dying," Tom commented.

"I highly doubt he's died from starvation or dehydration," Li'Chin muttered. "I think not."

"Look I don't get trapped on a baron planets often. The only time we had technology and stuff given to us. You teach, I stay ok," James said.

Tom shrugged his shoulders. "What about the desert?"

"Ok fine, I'll teach the trainees how to raise the cursed dead," James muttered.

"Well it'll give them something to slay," Tom said.

Li'Chin seemed lost for words yet again, he could only stare blankly at the pair.

James did the same to Tom, "can I help you with something Tom, or did you just come here to be my daily ass pain?"

"Oh, yeah. You've got some newbies who asked for extra training. What time's your Slayer training slot?" Tom questioned.

"My slot is the same as before," James replied.

"Fine, fine. When's that?" Tom said.

"Morning," James groaned in response.

"One more thing. Kevin needs replacing and sent to a Final Fantasy addict clinic, plus Ylara tried to choke one of the guys. She claims it was a scare tactic," Tom said.

"That's two things," James commented.

"Who cares?" Tom whined

"I do. What do you expect me to do about... oh hang on," James muttered. He turned his chair around to face the shelf behind him. "I've got my magic healing wand right here somewhere."

Tom rolled his eyes. "Your wife will be mad that you stole it. She uses it to fix her hair. Now can we be serious?"

"I was in a way," James said.

"Look you're the senior Slayer, I suppose..." Tom said. James narrowed his eyes and was about to interrupt him. "Higher ranked, not aged, plus Security guy. It's your job to sort it."

"Nobody can cure Kevin. And if all Ylara's done is try to choke someone during training, then that just means she's getting better," James said.

"At least Lena just punched you," Tom said quietly to Li'Chin.

"Ok so you want me to fix that too?" James said.

Tom casually nodded his head, "at least then Chakotay would be saner."

"All right Tom, I'll swap Ylara for Lena, just for you," James muttered as he turned back to the computer.

"Wow sarcasm overload today," Tom smiled cheekily. "I feel so special."

"Mr Stuart!" Li'Chin timidly yelled, if that's possible, it was more like a loud squeak.

Tom laughed behind his hand while James just smirked, he tried to suppress it as he looked up at Li'Chin with fake fear in his eyes. "Yes sir?"

"This is very important. We need these trainees in tip top fighting shape, I sense something huge is coming, something dangerous," Li'Chin said in one of those fake over dramatic voices.

"Really!?" James pretended to be shocked. "Why do you think the entire crew are being forced into training sessions? Do you think I get some strange kick out of making everyone train for my own personal entertainment?"

"Ylara too, you're both in on it," Tom added on. "It was her idea wasn't it?"

Li'Chin seemed to be immune to embarrassment, or he just chose to ignore them both. "Mr Wesley and I both see the signs, this area just smells of death."

"We're in space," Tom muttered.

Li'Chin pulled the glasses off his head, giving them an unneeded clean. "Metaphorically Mr Paris, obviously."

"Obviously," James imitated him. "Which begs the question, why are we still here?"

"Don't..." Tom grunted, shaking his head. "Get me started. We'll be going back to the asteroid field soon enough, the metals and other junk in it could help us out. You don't want to miss your chance to mine some metal to make another overcompensating weapon."

"Uh Tom, I've used knives most of my life and one big sword. Suddenly..." James muttered.

"Wow, getting a little defensive aren't we?" Tom smirked at him. "I'll leave it if you tell me what's the point in lugging around a big sword, when knives get the job done for you?"

"I've used swords before in longer fights, knives are great for quick one on one battles. The vision showed a lot of demons with swords, fire with fire, get my drift?" James replied, shaking his head.

"Ok, but it's still oversized," Tom said, smiling cheekily. "Do I need to put you in that clinic too?"

"I've never touched that program, so no," James said.

Li'Chin sighed, "so about the trainee exercises."

"What if the demons attack while I'm gone, which is guaranteed to happen," James questioned.

"Ah," Li'Chin smiled like he just won the argument. "Mr Wesley and I believe that this demon attack I've still only just found about, is linked to the danger we prophesied." Tom and James stared at him blankly. "I really should be kept in the loop."

"Well why, you two obviously can find this stuff out yourself," Tom mumbled.

Li'Chin settled himself down on the edge of the desk, not noticing the glare James was giving him. "This impending disaster is of a more grand scale, it goes much further than just these measly ships."

"Ookay, two things," James said as he climbed out of his chair. A tiny nudge sent Li'Chin flying onto the floor. "One. Don't ever sit on my desk. Two. Stop being cryptic and annoying, get to the point."

"Maybe you should have said that first, then pushed him off the desk," Tom laughed.

Li'Chin climbed to his feet, brushing invisible dirt off his pants. He then fixed his crooked glasses. "How rude." He noticed them staring at him yet again. "Ok from what we have put together from our own little visions and information, and of course our feelings..."

Both men muttered sarcastically, "of course."

He ignored them and continued. "Something is here, with us. It causes death and destruction." They both groaned again. "What?"

"Are you capable of explaining things properly?" James asked impatiently.

Li'Chin sighed, "I don't know for certain. All we do know is that whatever is coming for us, lead us right here and they have a much bigger objective."

"What here here, as in this area or the quadrant itself?" Tom questioned. "If it's the former I'm so going to question Kevin."

"That I do not know," Li'Chin responded. "Most likely just here here, we didn't get any feelings or visions until we entered that nebula."

"So what about James and Ylara's visions?" Tom questioned. "What makes you think their thing is linked to this?"

"This area stinks of death," Li'Chin said.

"You've said that already," James muttered. "I still don't see any reason to send the trainees off, with me, when we could still get attacked."

"We are ok for the time being, that I know," Li'Chin said. "At the moment, we're not a threat."

"We're not a threat!" Tom snapped. "We're very close to teaching the kids sword or knife fighting." James frowned in his direction, "not really, but Kevin got Annika swinging a samurai sword around like a swish kebab, heck Jessie knows how to use a sword. My god she was lethal without it."

"Only melee weapons I see," Li'Chin said.

"Phasers don't generally work on demons. They can at least stun them," James replied. "Now to help get that image of Annika swinging a sword around out of my head, why can't you or Mr Wesley take the trainees?"

"Well they won't be as safe, now will they?" Li'Chin replied, ignoring Tom giggling into his hand.

"I'll think about it, if it's only a few hours next week or something, I might do it," James said.

"Well I would have preferred a two da..." Li'Chin giddily said, he trailed off when he got another glare. "A few hours yes, maybe."

"I'd suggest the holodecks for this trip, but it's in use 24/7 and it's probably more dangerous than a shuttle mission," Tom said, pulling a face. "That's saying a lot."

"Ok Tom, you're still here," James commented.

Tom stared down at himself, then looked around. "Are you sure?" His eyes widened in horror, "oh my god, sarcasm, I have anger issues. Oh god, I said bloody earlier." He pointed his finger at James, "I'm turning into you!"

"Great, take the trainees out for me," James smiled smugly.

Tom muttered to himself, he turned to leave. "No way, don't forget to check in with me later." Li'Chin perked up, smiling expectantly. "Not you."

"Oh," Li'Chin sighed in disappointment. Tom walked out, still muttering to himself.

James sighed as well, then glanced at Li'Chin like he was hinting for something. Li'Chin didn't notice, and just remained where he was. James cleared his throat, still nothing. After an eye roll he yelled, "get out of my office!" The watcher jumped out of his skin.

"Ok ok jeez, someone should really teach you some manners," he rambled. "Let me know when you decide." He walked out, still shaking like a leaf.

The Bridge:

"It's all clear Lieutenant," the Security guy on the viewscreen said, not looking at least bit guilty for accusing them. "Your people don't have any of the material that caused the bombing. If you encounter the terrorists again..."

"Hang on, I don't hear an apology anywhere in there," Chakotay butted in.

"Kadin Station out," the alien stuttered, the viewscreen changed back.

Tom rolled his eyes, "have you ever thought about removing that Tolg junk from your face? It's scaring everyone."

"You mean you, no can do," Chakotay replied.

Tom sighed, "is the Flyer ready?"

Jodie nodded, "no, the group were waiting for confirmation that we're innocent."

Jessie groaned from her station, "this is the worst idea ever."

Tom chose to ignore her for the time being, "ok give them the message. Is Harry ready?"

"Not yet," Jessie answered.

The Security Office:

Li'Chin and Wesley had gathered some of the trainees around the seating area, each one of them held a bag. Ylara stood nearby, leaning against the wall.

James walked in, eyeing each person in the room suspiciously. "What's going on?"

"We were waiting for you, now let's head for the shuttle bay," Wesley said.

"Hang on, I never agreed. I said I'd think about it," James grumbled.

Li'Chin skipped forward, and I mean literally too, to stand directly in front of him. "Ylara has some interesting information."

Ylara rolled her eyes, "he already knows."

"You told them," James said, rolling his eyes. He went over to stand nearby her. "You do realise when you get interesting information like that, you keep it to yourself around watchers?"

Ylara sighed, she folded her arms to stand her ground. "Why are you so against training them anyway? We're training everyone else."

"I'm not, I just don't want to risk leaving right now," James replied.

"Uh," Nathan raised his hand. "I wasn't fully listening, James' voice makes me sleepy." James narrowed his eyes in his direction. "What about the station, you left when you were supposed to be training us."

"Oh yes how selfish of me. The replicators have been mostly worn out from weapons being created, I went over there to find more," James groaned.

"You're going, Mr Stuart," Li'Chin cheerfully added on. He found a sword in his face only a second later. "Um, but it's up to you."

"Why is it so important that I go?" James questioned.

"Well um. Mr Wesley?" Li'Chin squeaked.

"You have the most experience, it would be more fitting," Wesley replied.

"How do you know, what about her?" James questioned.

Ylara sighed, "I already told them none of us can go, what's the point?"

"Yeah, now's not the time. If it's just for a few hours and it's after this demon attack, I'm all for it. Not now," James groaned.

"They need it now," Wesley almost snapped. "Something's coming, and they will be killed if they don't learn how to survive in the field."

"Fine I get that, but what about the rest of the crew?" James said. "I don't see why they can't train with everyone else until this is over."

"You couldn't possibly protect everyone even if you were here," Wesley replied. "I know that your wife is more than competent enough to look after the kids. That's what you're really worried about."

"I think I have a good right to be worried as in my vision she was killed," James muttered.

"Visions aren't usually accurate," Ylara remarked.

"No but when it comes to stuff like that, they usually are," James said. "I'd rather not take the chance."

"Yes but that'll make both you and her train quite a bit, chances are she didn't train at all in that version of events. You don't know," Wesley said. "What we need to worry about is not even to do with Voyager, I'm sure Li'Chin mentioned that."

"He said it was related," James said.

"Yes, but what we sense happens first. Like Miss Ylara told us, Voyager isn't even in the place where it happens," Li'Chin stuttered. "Can you put the sword down."

"I hope you guys realise you're both targets if events play out as I saw them," James said, lowering the sword.

"So you're going?" Ylara questioned.

"No, I just like to threaten," James replied. The watchers tried to put their stern faces on. "If you want someone to teach them, that we can spare, ask Craig."

"The Delta Flyer Mark... um whatever number it's up to now is ready for you. Shuttle Bay One."

"Craig?" Ylara raised an eyebrow.

Wesley sighed, he tapped his commbadge. "Standby."

"He seems to know how to fight now, more or less," James explained.

"He's not going to care enough to do something like this," Ylara said.

"How is that any different from James doing it?" Nathan commented.

James shrugged, "exactly." He walked over to his desk to pick up a large bag, then turned back to leave. "Have fun."

Ylara frowned as the door opened for him, she spotted something small run passed the door. James looked after her, but didn't see it. He left anyway.

"But..." Li'Chin stuttered. "Ylara, maybe..."

Ylara meanwhile headed outside, immediately spotting Snugglebumps hopping about near the doorway.

"What on earth are you?" Her hand reached out and picked it up by the scruff of the neck. It wriggled in her grip.

Damien appeared around the corner, "hey, get off my baby!"

"Is this what your kind looks like as infants?" Ylara questioned, pulling a face. "Who'd sleep with you willingly?"

"No no," Damien muttered, holding his hands out. "That's my Snugglebumps, my slave. Give her back."

Ylara tried to hold back a giggle. "I can't count how many things was wrong with that entire sentence."

"Well they never did teach maths to you people, now give her back," Damien grumbled. "You'll be sorry if you don't."

"Sure," Ylara smiled, dropping the rabbit onto the floor. It ran away around the corner.

"Look what you did, you're on my list," Damien snapped, he ran after it.

"Which one?" Ylara sighed.

Chakotay paced the Ready Room, with his eyes darting around like he was hunting for something. Tom sat on the edge of his desk, clutching it tightly. He spoke finally. "So you understand that you can't come on this ship anymore." Chakotay's eyes shot at him. "Cos you know, cause of the thing? Safety thing."

"Mine, or yours?"

"Yours," Tom quickly swallowed the lump in his throat. "Two Slayers, a witch, and a... Craig I guess, hate you. Besides um..." Chakotay soon closed the gap in between them, staring down at him coldly. "Everyone's saying you and Damien..."

"If you finish that sentence I'll do the same to you."

"Right," Tom squeaked. He tried to clear his throat to stop his voice betraying him again. "Why are you so bothered about taking Voyager off me? You didn't seem so eager to take over two years ago, when... that thing happened."

"Haven't you wondered why they were so eager to get you and the other circus freaks on this mission?" Chakotay avoided the question. He looked vacantly around. "Starfleet must have been as sick of you as I was. I can't think why else you and James the Parent Slayer would be picked to lead it."

"You know. I think you're just being avoidy on the whole Janeway thing."

Chakotay grabbed his arm to drag him to the door. "Out."

"This is my office," Tom protested.

"Not anymore," Chakotay groaned as he pushed him through the door. The door closed behind him.

Unknown to him a figure was now sitting in the chair behind the desk. A pair of legs swung on top of the desk.

"How come he got the gig, cracker prize?"

"Hmm possibly," Chakotay muttered. His eyes widened, he turned around to face the desk.

The figure almost jumped out of her seat, she settled for placing a hand on her chest.

"What, what happened to you?" she asked.

"What are you doing here?" Chakotay asked at the same time.

He shook it off quicker. "Kiara, when did you get back?" His face frowned as he noticed the horrified look on the familiar girl's face. "Oh, right. This could take some explaining."

She quickly climbed out of the seat. "You look dead, and Borgy."

"At least you're looking good. You've grown."

"Don't give me the granddad remark," Kiara grumbled. She tried to close the gap between them, but Chakotay stepped back a bit. "What happened?"

He sighed, "I take it Q kept you out of the loop. Probably a good idea. This'll be awkward."

"You look like the Tolg got you, why the awkward?"

"Well that story is a little... well it's more complicated than that. Why don't we find you somewhere to stay. I hear the Leda has some room opening up."

Kiara folded her arms defiantly. "Nah uh. Why is Tom in charge instead of you and Mum? Why is you being a Tolg a long story? Huh?"

For once Chakotay looked really worried. "I don't know about the first one. Look um, you're finished your training, aren't you?"

"Fine!" Kiara rolled her eyes. "I'll ask Lena." She marched out.

"No!" Chakotay snapped as he quickly followed her.

Everyone on the Bridge turned their heads to look over at the new arrival.

"Wow, look who's back," Tom grinned. His face fell when he caught sight of Chakotay's face.

Jessie stepped out from her station. "Kiara?"

"Yep," Kiara mumbled. "You're not a zombie Borg, are you?"

Jessie pulled a face, "no. Um, how's things?"

"Confusing," was the answer.

"Yeah, that's a sign of settling in," Tom mumbled.

Kiara put her hands on her hips, "ok something's going on. Where's Janeway?" Everyone's face fell. "Huh, come on. Out with it!"

"Maybe you should sit down first," Tom suggested.

Jessie threw him a glare, then looked back at Kiara. "She's not he..."

Chakotay interrupted her, "I think she should hear this from family, don't you? Come back inside."

Kiara caught the disturbed look on Jessie's face, the colour in her own faded. "What happened to her? Please, I need to know." With tears in her eyes she turned back to her grandfather. "I'd rather not upset Lena by asking her, so please."

Chakotay closed his eyes, "in private, I'll tell you."

"I don't think that's a good idea," Jessie said. "I don't want you getting the wrong story."

"What? The truth is the truth," Chakotay snapped, passing her a cold stare. Kiara caught it, her eyes widened. She gave him a slap on the arm.

"What's wrong with you!" she screeched. "You're different, creepy even." She looked in Jessie's direction. "Jess, what happened to mum, I mean grandma?"

"She's just covering 'cos her psycho husband murdered her," Chakotay butted in.

"What?"

"Don't!" Jessie snapped. "How dare you!"

"Yes, yes," Chakotay groaned. "You only care about who you're sleeping with. Leave it alone."

"No! Your granddaughter comes home, and you act like this. She deserves the truth, not to be scared witless," Jessie scolded.

"She's got a point," Tom piped up.

"But..." Chakotay sighed, feeling deflated. He turned to Kiara, who's traumatised face made his cold exterior melt a little. "I'm sorry. I've not been myself lately."

"She knows that," Jessie mumbled.

"Maybe someone else can..." Chakotay stammered. Kiara stared at him expectantly, a few tears rolling down her cheek. "I don't think... Maybe we could go back in the Ready Room."

"Jess, did James do it?" Kiara asked without moving her stare away.

"No," Jessie replied.

"I figured," Kiara mumbled. "Then what happened? I don't want to ask Lena. This isn't how I want to see her again."

"Oh god," Jessie whispered to herself. She closed her eyes. Everyone else did something similar.

"Vampires," Chakotay quietly answered. "I'm sorry, this is just an..."

"Awkward situation, whatever," Kiara sniffled. Jessie stepped closer but she backed away from her. "Please don't. This can't be happening."

Everyone else in the room felt very uncomfortable. Even Tom had fallen dead silent.

"Kiara, sweetheart, I think we..." Chakotay started to say.

"Don't sweetheart me! Mum's dead, you're a grouchy ex Tolg, Tom's the Captain, and something furry is crawling near my leg!"

Jessie's eyes widened. The next thing everyone else knew she was gone, and the Conference Room door swooshed closed.

"Ha! Still funny," Damien laughed from the turbolift. He knelt down, "Snuggley, back here. Now." The rabbit seemed to chase after Jessie instead. "That's good too." He looked up, frowning at Kiara. "Oh, Q Girl's back. This I'm going to need popcorn for. Hang on." He ran after his pet.

"He's here, and allowed on the bridge?" Kiara stuttered. "God, this is like some horror film. Or at least a spoof of a one. Can it get worse?"

Everyone looked uneasy.

"Get that thing away from me!" Jessie snapped. She climbed onto a chair as the rabbit followed, and sniffed at her.

Damien smiled deviously, "don't be so whiny. The chair can hold your pregnant ass for the moment, so no problem."

Jessie glared at him. The chair in front of her was pushed, hard, towards him. It knocked him flying to the ground. She smiled smugly until she noticed the rabbit had managed to get on the table, and was mere centimetres away from her. "Holy crap, how!?"

Damien climbed back up in time to watch her push the chair nearer to the window. He rushed over to scoop Snugglebumps up.

"So, has anyone introduced Y'Annoying to Mini Q yet? I don't want to miss it."

"No, I wouldn't want you to miss it either," Jessie grumbled.

Damien smiled and stepped closer. Jessie tried to back off but she was already at the window.

"No! Any closer and I'll..." He stepped closer. "I'll tell *Mini Q* about your involvement with Janeway and the Tolg."

"Ooooh, scary," Damien smirked, closing the gap a little further. The rabbit tried to leap from his arms, but he kept a grip on it. This made Jessie jump enough to move the chair she was on forward, bumping into him. Just as that happened the trio disappeared in a blue flash.

The confused pair reappeared in a small square room. Jessie got off of her chair, her face scrunched up as she looked around. One push sent the chair flying into Damien and Snugglebumps, sending them separately backwards.

"What the hell is this?"

"Ugh, crazy hormonal witch." He got back up. "I didn't do this, I don't even like you."

"You think *this* is me being hormonal? Just wait till I really am," Jessie grumbled. "You've trapped me in this room with you and that rat!" The rabbit hopped towards the only door, her eyes followed it.

"God, my plans are so much better than this. I don't know where we are. Also, the last thing I want is to be locked up with the Slayer's..."

"Finish that, and I'll neuter the both of you!"

"What? It's just too easy to insult you two, well bunnies." Jessie clenched her fists. "No that was harsh, I'll admit." Damien looked over at his pet. "You don't have a million kids like her, do you Snuggles?"

Jessie looked like she was ready to explode when the door opened. An alien man walked in, shutting the door behind him.

"Now, this is a surprise. You got two."

"Hmm, not you huh?" Jessie groaned.

"Wow, you've even caught dumb blonde off him as well," Damien muttered.

"Ugh, will you get off James!" Jessie snapped. "And don't say *I will if you will!*"

"Uh huh," the man at the door muttered. "You two make yourselves at home, you're going to be here for a while. Right?" He looked down at Snugglebumps. "Well one of you will be anyway."

Both of the captives' eyes widened further than usual when the rabbit spoke with a deep voice. "Actually, I'm sure you'll be happy with both of them."

"Snugglebumps?" Damien squeaked.

"Yeah about that name," Snugglebumps glowed, then morphed into a humanoid, a rather large one. "It doesn't really suit me."

"Crap," Jessie groaned.

TO BE CONTINUED